

## The Effect of Azari Tribe's Ethnicism on Iran's National Security Stabilization

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### ABSTRACT

*Azari tribe is amongst the most original and most rooted Iranian tribes. With its Iranian roots, Azerbaijan has an old and subtle bond and the review of the history, as well, demonstrates that being Azari is interlaced and intertwined with being Iranian. Following the policies of the old colonialism, the universal imperialism has made efforts during the contemporary era to exercise the policy of the ethnicity differences' underlining amongst the Azari tribe with full-scale industriousness thereby to guide the public thoughts of the people in Azerbaijan towards this issue. Now, the question is that how the inflaming of the ethnicism amongst the Azari tribe in Iran can threaten the stabilization of Iran's national security? The recognition of the incentives of the Azari tribe's ethnicism in Iran is the necessity for the processing of this political-social issue. Our findings prove it through a descriptive-analytical study that most of the discrepancy-stimulating policies of the ethnicism in Iran, including the domestic and the foreign ones, have encountered failure due to the religious and ideological agreements and parity between the Azari tribe and the dominant Persian-speaking tribe in Iran and Azari tribe's ethnicism has never been a serious threat for the national security of Islamic Republic of Iran.*

*Keywords: Azari tribe's ethnicism, Iran's Azerbaijan, nationalism, Iran's national security*

### Introduction

Ethnicism has always been one of the most important and most challenging internal issues in the area of the national security for the various countries around the globe and the history has shown that the ethnicism and tribal nationalism have always caused the highest amount of social damages and discrepancies for the various Islamic nations of the Islamic countries. After the initiation of such an ominous phenomenon as colonialism during the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, the policy of "start a discrepancy and rule" was placed atop of the suppressive policies' agenda of the European colonialist countries, particularly the old colonialist, i.e. the great Britain. It did not last a long time before the colonialist states' figuring out of the devastating and destructive capacity of the ethnic discrepancies within the realm of the Islamic territories and spending of their doubled efforts for misusing this gap in order to create differences, multiplicities and, resultantly, maximal disintegration of the Islamic countries. The colonialist states made maximal use of this important and influential capacity in any possible way for more weakening of the Islamic states. In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the northern part of Azerbaijan was segregated by the colonialist Russian empire. Undoubtedly, it was with the commencement of the world wars during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and continuation of the policy of weakening and decomposition of the great Islamic states by the colonialist powers that attentions were paid by them to the extensive potential and capacity and the good talent of the ethnic diversity for getting the discrepancy-stimulating, chaotic, filthy and unethical policies implemented and put atop of their agenda. The rooted

and periodical raids by the Ottoman empire onto Azerbaijan and the efforts of the Ottoman government for annexing this region to its own soil from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century (every now and then), as well and in between, was not devoid of effect in segmentation and segregation of part of the Azerbaijan regions from Iran. The colonialist powers knew it well that the lingual and ethnic discrepancies of the Azari tribe are the best potential against Iran's Persian-speaking majority are the best potential for the separation of this region from Iran. According to the important and strategic geographical position of the Azari tribe's majority in regions like Caucasus, Anatolia, Minor Asia and northwest of Iran, the colonialist states have always endeavored to prevent Azerbaijan from ever being annexed to any of the Islamic states in Iran or Ottoman empire and be inclined towards seeking independence. After the end of WWII, half of the Azerbaijan region was in the possession of Soviet Union and another half was in its old soil, i.e. Iran. After the victory of the Islamic revolution of Iran, the universal imperialism started seriously following the policies of the former colonialists and practicing Azari tribe's ethnic discrepancy-stimulation policy in Iran during the contemporary era, as well, for the fact that Azari tribe could be employed as a hidden and, of course, very important capacity for disordering the national security in Iran and, on the other hand, half of Azerbaijan had been separated from Iran's soil as a result of the colonialists' actions and the other half was still remaining annexed to Iran and in a subtle relationship and bond with Islam and Shiism but enjoying common lingual and cultural roots with the northern half (Azerbaijan Republic). On the other hand, the ethnic-lingual discrepancies between the Azari Tribe and the Persian-speaking majority in Iran can set the ground for these disputes and conflicts and evoke the greed of Iran's foreign enemies. Since Iran has various ethnicities with different tribes, languages, dialects and creeds, the establishment of unification between these tribes seems to be a complex and difficult issue. The social and political insecurities constantly form movements through the stimulation of the domestic and foreign factors and provoking domestic streams inside Iran that are considered as external threats in regard of Iran's national security.

The primary goal of the present writing is the investigation of the potentially and actually effective factors in the Azeri Tribe's ethnicism challenges in regard of the national security in Iran. By ethnicism amongst the Azeri tribe, the possession of strong and extreme tendencies towards the race, language and other old cultural manifestations of Azari tribe and its non-transformation to the primary element of public solidarity and convergence on the grounds of a whole (Iran) and its damaging of the political, security and social stability of the Iranian society is intended in the present study. Extreme ethnicism (such as pan-Turkism) leads to the political and social instability and flaws the national unity and solidarity that resultantly makes the national security's instability rule the society; thus, ethnicism is not just a political concept and phenomenon rather it is accompanied by extensive social outcomes. The necessity for exploring this problem lies in that although Azari tribe, as one of the two large Iranian tribes, is in agreement in religious, ideological and historical terms with the majority of the people in Iran, i.e. with Shiism, it is different in terms of language and ethnic bigotries from the other Iranian ethnicities and this makes it possess schismatic potentials; thus, the identification and efforts for the repelling of the discrepancy-stimulating elements between the Azari tribe and the other Iranian tribes, especially the Persian-speaking majority, has always been one of the most necessary and most important political and social concerns in Iran. The present article tries offering well-calculated, proper and practical solutions for confrontation and correct counteraction of the Azari tribe's ethnicism in line with the preservation of the national authority and security of Islamic Republic of Iran.

### Study Background

The article "investigating the role of pan-Turkism discourse in the national security of Islamic Republic of Iran"<sup>1</sup> tries evaluating the effect of the extremist stream of Pan-Turkism on the national security of Iran; meanwhile exercising care that this article has investigated the relationship between the Pan-Turkism stream (as a stream guided from outside and a minor group having no influence and infiltration amidst the Azari tribe), it has to be stated regarding the foresaid article's difference from the present study that the present article deals with the Azari-speaking tribe in general as an overall foundation.

The article "ethnicism in Azerbaijan: the nature and performance"<sup>2</sup> has more approached this phenomenon from the perspective of sociology and introduces Azari ethnicism as a potential and hidden social danger and considers it somehow as a nationalistic gap for the national security of Iran but the present article deals with the mutual positive and negative effects of this tribe and the national security of Iran and it eventually introduces Azari tribe as an influential and advancing capacity for the stability of the future national security of Islamic Republic of Iran. Also, the article "the pathology of the effect of ethnicism on national security"<sup>3</sup> deals with the ethnicism as one of the most important schismatic and hypocrisy-stimulating factors for the security of Iran and avoids concentration on a

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<sup>1</sup> Ebrahimi, Sajjad and Shakeri Khou'ei, Ehsan, *journal of Iran's social sciences studies*, winter, 2014, ISBN: Islamic Azad University, science and research, 43, 11(4)

<sup>2</sup> Pourgholi, Mohsen, *journal of Tehran and journal of Hasun*, winter, 2007, no.14, pp.192-215

<sup>3</sup> Mehri Karnami, Muhammad, *Tehran, journal of Hasun*, spring, 2009, no.19, pp.166-182

given ethnicity unlike the present article that tries investigating the relationship between Iran's national security and Azari tribe's ethnicism.

**Concepts:**

**A) Ethnicity Conceptualized:**

Tribe is a term referring to a group of certain people and relatives<sup>4</sup>. As commonly stated in sociological terms, tribe is a group of people who have a closely similar and single language, religion, ideology, culture, land and physical properties; they may also share common myths about their forefathers, common memories, one or several common cultural and minimal elements of solidarity and association amongst the elites<sup>5</sup>. It is these same commonalities and associations that separate a tribe from another; this same characteristic causes unification in the common interests; the tribe members engage in important tribal affairs; defend their tribal land against the invasion by the foreign tribes and feel close sympathy with the individuals of their own tribe and clan and these cause the creation of a sort of mutual interest. Tribe is a human group not a racial one and it enjoys a common language, a common culture, a common lifestyle and a particular set of group tendencies within the framework of a larger racial branch in such a way that it becomes more distinguishable and separable from the other racial groups. In sum, ethnicity is an instrument for the separation of a group of individuals from another.

It can be understood from the conceptualization of ethnicity based on the foresaid definition that, like the other words in the human sciences, there is no generally accepted comprehensive definition. Here, we suffice to one of the most well-known definitions with a relative comprehensiveness and we avoid verbosity in this regard:

According to Mc Lin, ethnicity is the quality of belonging to a tribal group; ethnicity includes awareness about the historical roots and common traditions and/or a group's enjoyment of a similar geographical, lingual and religious roots and common residence pattern, enjoyment of the similar political considerations, particularly in regard of the political land and institutions as well as enjoyment of a sort of sense of distinction and difference from the others<sup>6</sup>.

**B) National Security Conceptualized:**

National security includes the psychological and material chasing of security in the national level and it is essentially a responsibility of the governments to prevent the direct threats stemming from outside to the persistence of the regimes, citizenship system and lifestyle of the citizens<sup>7</sup>. National security deals with the absence of threats to the values in objective dimension and with the absence of the fear about how the values may be threatened and make calculations about the threats and the values in the subjective dimension<sup>8</sup>. Preservation of the national security in the Islamic Republic of Iran is of a great importance due to the numerosity of the ethnicities, regional importance of the country and existence of stubborn foreign enemies like the US and Israel for this country but it also appears to be difficult. The political experiences have shown that the US has been looking for driving the Islamic Republic of Iran by any possible means towards isolation in its international policies and universal equations after the Islamic Republic of Iran's establishment on 11<sup>th</sup> of February, 1979, following a political-social revolution; it is also struggling to take advantage of all the existent and possible potentials for disordering the internal security of Iran. Undoubtedly, one of the best options for the actualization of the disordering of the national security in Iran is the hidden potential of ethnicism. In between, Azari tribe, as one of the two largest Iranian clans, has always drawn the attentions of the foreign enemies of Iran and its adjacency to two countries of Azerbaijan Republic and Turkey with common lingual roots has added to this significance which has per se increased the foreign states' greed for creation of two poles in Iran.

As for the preservation of the political authority and stability and, in one word, for preserving the national security, some questions can be posited and the proper, logical and operational answers to them by the statesmen and stateswomen would be a long leap towards the achievement of this important goal:

Is the national security only related to the security of the rulers or the tribal majority groups in the society? Does national security include all the various elements of the society such as language, religion, race and national interests? Is the national security in favor of all the social classes and the citizens present inside the borders of the national society? Will any challenge or threat to the national unity have a negative effect on all the social classes and groups?

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<sup>4</sup> Amid, *Persian dictionary*, p.984

<sup>5</sup> Smith, *Nationalism*, p.51

<sup>6</sup> The office for the strategic plans and investigations, "ethnic incongruences and national security", pp.7-9; Ahmadi Hamid, "ethnicity and ethnicism in Iran: from myth to reality", *seasonal journal of national studies*, no.8, p.192

<sup>7</sup> Mandal, "the variable face of the national security", p.52

<sup>8</sup> Eskandar Mo'meni et al, "national security of Islamic Republic of Iran and changes in the security strategy of the US", *seasonal journal of the disciplinary and police knowledge*, 13(2):174

**C) Azari Tribe:**

**D)** Azari tribe are people with common Turkish language which is, in the meanwhile, mixed with rich elements of the original Iranian culture<sup>9</sup> and it is mostly spoken by the residents of the regions in the northwest of Iran such as Azerbaijan-e-Gharbi and Azerbaijan-e-Sharghi, Ardabil, Qazvin, Hamadan and some other regions of Iran as well as abroad in countries like Azerbaijan Republic and also in provinces sharing border with Turkey, Georgia and Russia (Dagestan). The present study's intention of Azari tribe is the various tribes speaking Azari language disregarding any other accent, dialect and geographical scattering in various regions of Iran. And, of course, some of them may occasionally have subtle kinship, cultural and religious relationships and bonds with the Azari individuals inhabiting regions outside Iran, particularly Azerbaijan Republic and Nakhchivan.

**Avoidance of Ethnicism and Importance of Preserving the National Security in Iran:**

Preservation of the national security is of a considerable importance for the Islamic Republic of Iran which has regionally complex and special conditions. The investigation of the security challenges regarding the ethnic multiplicity and offering of the proper solutions for fighting with them is a necessary duty for every law-abiding, faithful and patriotic Iranian. Of course, this important goal can be hardly and difficulty achieved in the national scale and there is a need for spending of hefty costs. Due to its geopolitical situation and the political-revolutionary nature of its system, Islamic Republic of Iran has been facing from the very beginning with foreign and internal threats. Imam Khomeini (PBUH) has the following order about the importance of the preservation of the Islamic system: "the preservation of the system is amongst the most obligatory of the obligations"<sup>10</sup>. Under the current conditions, the preservation of the independence and territorial integrity and, in one word, guarding the Islamic government and Islamic revolution, can be accomplished in the light of avoiding any sort of ethnicism, especially Azari-oriented ethnicism. One of the most important internal factors in Iran with the ability of influencing the national security is the issue of the ethnicities' multiplicity and, considering the fact that Azari tribe in Iran enjoys a sort of absolute majority in contrast to the other ethnicities, the establishment of healthy and sound and constructive relationship away from any kind of multiplicity amongst the Azari tribe as well as with the other tribes, particularly the Persian-speaking majority, has always been proposed as one of the most effective factors for the preservation of national balance and equilibrium in the Islamic Republic's system. Therefore, the investigation of the national security threats in this regard and offering of the proper solutions for fighting with such threats is a national as well as a human but also a divine duty and obligation. Since Iran is a country accommodating various tribes, the Iranian ethnicities were envisioned as the centers of domestic crisis by the foreign forces following the US's deployment of army in the region in 2001. Therefore, in this period of time, the management of the issues related to ethnicism and, especially, extreme ethnicism by the Azari tribe is a critical, sensitive and resolving issue in regard of the national security. It has to be noted that the subject of fight with ethnicism in Iran has been pursued by the officials of the Islamic system with a lot of sensitivities.

**The Mutual Relationship between Ethnicism and National Security:**

Ethnicity and national security are in a mutual and bilateral relationship meaning that whenever the ethnicities under the administration of a multiethnic society were subjected to exploitation, humiliation, negligence and generally injustice of different kinds, including social, economic, administrative and others, the society would be forced to move towards chaos, discrepancy and, in one word, creation of two or more poles. The countries' failure in homogenization of the various tribes and social groups and their adoption of the improper justice methods and unfair wealth and natural resources' distribution cause the social disintegration and segregation of social-political forces as a result of which new security threats are followed and the macro-level social-political infrastructures are fragmented and this leads to the weakening of the political system's policy-making and non-accountability thereof<sup>11</sup>. Such issues as multiple segregations and multiplicity of the social foundations and the encountered problems have caused a lot of essential importance to be given to nation-building in the third world as well as the integration and evolution of the ethnic movements<sup>12</sup>.

**The Effect of the Foreign Stimulating Factors in Azari Tribe's Instigation:**

It has been claimed that the provocation of Azari people in Baku, in the western coasts of Caspian Sea, and, in general, the ethnicism enlightened minds of Caucasus and their constant relationship with the Azeri people in Russia and other Azari-dwelling regions of the world in the course of history<sup>13</sup> as well as the induction of such a mindset as the full-scale tribal weakening and restriction and humiliation for the Azeri people living in Iran and the news silence and boycott by the Islamic Republic of Iran's government and, more importantly, the absence of proper and strong accountability amongst the governmental bodies in these cases have always set the ground for the formation

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/countries/azerbaijan.html#land>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.imam-khomeini.ir/fa/c76\\_/15369](http://www.imam-khomeini.ir/fa/c76_/15369)

<sup>11</sup> Mehri Karnami, "pathology of the effect of ethnicism on the national security", *seasonal journal of Hasun*, (19): 168

<sup>12</sup> Hosseinzadeh, "Iran's ethnic groups: differences and similarities", *seasonal journal of national studies*, (8): 17

<sup>13</sup> Pourgholi, "ethnicism in Azerbaijan: the nature and the performance", *seasonal journal of Hasun*, (14): 198

of the anti-security movements by some of the Azari tribes' adolescents against the government. In between, the Azerbaijan Republic's media have constantly made efforts to cover the ethnicism movements in Azerbaijan Region by the news and media institutes<sup>14</sup>. As the only country with an absolutely Azari majority, Azerbaijan Republic claims support of Azari minorities in the other countries of the world and, considering the fact that the Azari tribe has drawn a lot of attentions in Iran, most of the stimulations by the democratic republic of Azerbaijan are carried out for supporting the Azari Iranians with various goals. This might be the only response to the unkindness of the then Iranian government for reclaiming Azerbaijan and reannexing it to the motherland of Iran. About a century has elapsed from the endorsement of Golestan contract (on 25<sup>th</sup> of October, 1813) and Torkamanchay contract (21<sup>st</sup> of February, 1828) and, notably, the residents of Nakhchivan and other regions in Caucasus and even Azerbaijan Republic (formation of a common federation with Iran) are strongly willing to rejoin Iran<sup>15</sup>; however, this goal was never accomplished with the unkindness of the then Iranian government and, of course, the British government's obstructionism<sup>16</sup>.

#### **The Role of Domestic Media in Stimulating Azari Tribe for Performing Anti-Security Actions:**

Experience has shown that several cases of ethnic-nationalistic default or enmity by some fellows of media inside Iran have caused the stimulation of the Azari tribe's ethnic feelings and zeal during the past several decades and efforts should be made in line with Iran's national security stability for excessively preventing the repetition of these cases; the security systems should seriously prevent the repetition of these cases<sup>17</sup>. Here, some examples of these cases can be pointed out: a controversial caricature in Iran Newspaper in the "weekly journal of Friday's Iran", on 12<sup>th</sup> of May, 2006, that had compared the Turkish-speaking people with cockroaches caused the extensive riot and demonstration in cities like Tabriz, Urmia and other large and small Azari-speaking cities and, in one case, gathering of the people in front of Tehran University<sup>18</sup>. In another case, Islamic Republic of Iran's television caused the sensitization of the Azari tribe once again after the broadcasting of a TV program called Fetileh (Hotel Fetileh) on 6<sup>th</sup> of November, 2015, from the Channel Two and showcasing slandering of the Azari Tribe (some of the politicians and representatives of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran declared that this program have been intentionally offensive)<sup>19</sup> and this caused other sporadic objects and protests and, of course, foreigners' support of the created tensions in the Azari-speaking regions. The other uproar was instigated after the insultation by the newspaper "Tarh-e-Now" on 20<sup>th</sup> of July, 2016, through a quotation by Rostam, the Iranian hero, in Shahnameh in his addressing of the Turani tribe (the miserable anonymous Turk tribe) which has been mistakenly or purposefully imagined as having things in common with the Azari tribe<sup>20</sup>.

#### **The Historical-National Root of Azerbaijan and Azari Tribe and Foreign Threats:**

In the course of its several thousand-year history, Azerbaijan has always been part of the vast land of Iran<sup>21</sup>. Many governments have commonly made efforts for separating Azerbaijan from Iran. In the contemporary history, the Russian government made efforts after Golestan and Torkamanchay contracts to grant Russian entity to the regions occupied by Azerbaijan and it constantly struggled to bring all the territory of Azerbaijan (Iran's Azerbaijan) under its occupation but it was forced to retreat following its occupation thereof. The ottoman government, as well, has always been thinking during the recent centuries to annex this region to its own occupied territory with such an excuse as the existence of common lingual roots with Azari tribe and it has also captured parts of Azerbaijan and Caucasus in certain cross-sections of time but it has also been faced always with the negative reaction of the people in Azerbaijan. In one of these interventions that was taken in 1918 after the occupation of Ganjeh and, then, Badkubeh by the hands of the Ottoman forces and with the support of the first head of ministers in Azerbaijan Republic, i.e. Fat-h Ali Khan Khuisi and formal but, of course, false declaration of Azerbaijan as the land of Aran, the Azerbaijani elders like Sheikh Muhammad Khiabani, Haj Ismail Amir Khizi and Haji Ali Naghi Ganje'ei were provoked to confront and take counteracting actions against the Ottoman government and its allies. Publishing the newspaper "Azerbaijan the integral part of Iran", they engaged in full-scale and practical confrontation with the Ottoman government's thoughts<sup>22</sup>; in the meanwhile, some of the patriotic Iranian enlightened minds like Malek Al-Sho'ara Bahar, as well, played a constructive role in awakening the Azeri Tribe<sup>23</sup>. It has to be pointed out here that the thing that made the heart of the Azeri tribe and the Azerbaijani people keep on pounding for Iran and stick to their Iranian roots was the common religious root, i.e. Islam and religion which was Shiism, concomitantly along

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/818222>

<sup>15</sup> Morad Ali Beygi Langarudi, "Pan-Turkism and Iran's national unity", p.63

<sup>16</sup> Morad Ali Beygi Langarudi, "Pan-Turkism and Iran's national unity", pp.64-75

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.anaj.ir/News/54531>

<sup>18</sup> *Objectional gatherings in Tabriz, Urmia and Tehran, journal of E'etamad, retrieved on 1<sup>st</sup> of February, 2010*

<sup>19</sup> <https://fa.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://fa.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

<sup>21</sup> Richard Foltz, "Religions of the Silk Road: Premodern Patterns of globalization", Palgrave Macmillan, rev. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2010, p.27

<sup>22</sup> Morad Ali Beygi Langarudi, "Pan-Turkism and Iran's national unity", p.74

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p.74

with the following of the guardianship of the household (Ahl Al-Bayt) of the great prophet of Islam (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards). Such an element as religion played an essential role in this regard and it made the Azari tribe stay away in a general and macro-level approach from the Russians with the roots of orthodox Christianity as well as Ottomans with Hanafi and Sunni Islam's roots. This concept and claim was vividly felt and proved in the battle between Iran and Iraq during the eight years of zealous defense of the Islamic Iran's soil by the Azari tribe along with the other Iranian tribes. Most of

The Azari people who are predominantly Muslim and Twelver Shiite, have always endeavored by resorting to their heavenly book, i.e. the Holy Quran<sup>24</sup>, as well as the conduct ways of the prophet (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards)<sup>25</sup> and the immaculate Imams (may Allah hail on them)<sup>26</sup> to avoid any sort of improper ethnic bigotry and take steps on the path of Islam and God and truth. After the victory of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, the elders of the Islamic system emphasized on the importance of preserving unity between all the Iranian tribes for the safeguarding of Islam and preservation of the national security. Ayatollah Khamenei has the following command in this regard: "nowadays, the motivations for the instigation of the ethnicities are serious. The enemy is busy making instigations. The enemy should not be underestimated. Be careful. This is amongst the very important issues. It is felt that there are hands at work for bringing the control of this task out of the hands of the government"<sup>27</sup>.

### **The Plan for the Segregation of Iran and (Iran's) Azerbaijan's Independence:**

The plan for the segmentation of Iran has been repeatedly proposed and pursued by the global imperialism. The westerners' thought chambers that were formed since the period of the old colonialism and utilized more intensively for the England and Russia's military and political purposes are undeniable facts. These two large colonialists repeatedly endeavor to separate Azerbaijan for themselves and transform it into their own colony; the colonialists' policies were in line with Iran's segmentation after WWI. In the contemporary era, as well, the US and Zionists have always been thinking about achievement of their goal of Azerbaijan's separation from Iran. As an example, it has to be stated that Dana Rohrabacher, a representative of US congress, has recently demanded the government to make efforts for separating Azerbaijan from Iran<sup>28</sup>. Rohrabacher writes that "support of such a collaboration is deemed reasonable to the US because the dictatorship and the despotic government established in Tehran is our enemy as well as their enemy. The people of Azerbaijan have been geographically separated and, after almost two centuries of the foreign governance, they demand the reunification of their land". Following the ridiculous and interventionist claim by the US congress, one member of Azerbaijan Republic's governing body demanded the government to change this country's name to northern Azerbaijan. Siavash Nowruzov, one member of Azerbaijan Republic's parliament, suggested that 16 million Azeris that reside in the northwest of Iran should become a united and unified nation. Considered as the southern Azerbaijan, this land has a population twice as much that of the Azerbaijan Republic in the north. According to the reports, this suggestion has been taken into account by several parliamentary members. This is just one small example of the numerous cases of the global imperialism's interventionism against Iran's domestic affairs<sup>29</sup>. It has to be frankly stated here that, if we want to refer to the history, we should make it correctly and impartially. The truth is that the Azerbaijan Republic that was separated during the peak of colonialism in 1828 by Russia from Iran should be now annexed thereto for the fact that the study of the history makes it clear that Azerbaijan has been always part of Iran's soil since three thousand years ago and the Azari tribe's identity has been and is parallel to and symmetrical with the Iranian identity. In order to prove this claim, we can offer a thousand robust and well-documented proofs but we suffice to the mentioning of several historical examples to remain brief.

First of all, it is interesting that Siavash Nowruzov, a member of the Azerbaijan Republic's parliament, would surely understand in case of perfectly spelling his first and family names that they are completely Iranian and that they have been repeated tens of times in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, the biggest mythical heritage of Iran. It has to be stated

<sup>24</sup> "Yā Ayyoha Al-Nās Ennā Khalaqnakom Min Zakaren Wa Onthā Wa Ja'alnakom Sho'uban Wa Qabā'elan Li Ta'arafū Enna Akramakom Enda Allah Atqākom Enna Allah Alimon Khabir" meaning "O people, we have created you from a male and a female and we made you take forms in groups and tribes so that you may become familiar with each other; verily, the dearest of you to the God is the most pious of You; the God is all-knowing and well-informed" (SŪRAH AL-HOJORĀT, ĀYA 13).

<sup>25</sup> "Man Kān Fi Qalbehi Habbaton Min Khardalen Min Asabiyyaten Ba'athahū Allah Yawm Al-Qiāmah Ma'a A'arāb Al-Jāheliyyah". The great prophet (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards) orders that "he who has tribal bigotry in his heart even for the size of a mustard seed, the God will resurrect him or her on the Judgment Day like the ignorant times' Arabs" (Kolaini, Al-Kāfi, v.2, p.308).

<sup>26</sup> It has been stated in a hadith from the fourth Imam of Shiites, Imam Zain Al-Ābedin Sajjad (PBUH), that "Al-Asabiyyah Al-Lati Ya'atham Alayhā Sāhebohā An Yarā Al-Rajol Sherār Qawmehi Khairan Min Khiār Qawmen Akharin Wa Laisa Min Al-Asabiyyah An Yohebb Al-Rajol Qawmahū Wa Lāken Min Al-Asabiyyah An Yo'ayyen Qawmahū Alā Al-Zolm" meaning "the bigotry that makes the individual practicing it sinful is an individual's realization of the bad of his tribe as being better than the good of another tribe. This is not bigotry if a person likes his own tribe and people rather than assisting one's own tribe to keep on perpetration of sins out of fanaticism" (Kolaini, Al-Kāfi, v.2, pp.308-309).

<sup>27</sup> <https://farsi.khamenei.ir/speech-content?id=3016>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/143636>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/143636>

that Siavash is amongst the great ancient Iran's heroes<sup>30</sup> and Nowruz is one of the biggest celebrations held during the ancient Iran's times<sup>31</sup> and it is still being held with utmost magnificence amongst Iranians with the common and original roots, to wit in Iran and the other countries that have been separated from it (during the colonialism period). The examples of the subtle bond between the Azari tribe and the Iranian nation are many but not all of them can be presented herein. As an example, Nezami Ganjavi, one of the greatest poets in the history of Azerbaijan Republic and Iran, has firstly recited poems in Persian and, secondly, realizes himself as an originally Iranian person and expresses his being proud thereof. Here, an example of the poems by Nezami Ganjavi is presented for describing his Iranian identity:

“All of the world is body and Iran is the heart; the speaker is not ashamed of this comparison”<sup>32</sup>

Ganjavi composes the following verse in a beautiful poem:

“However, Iranians have pleased me by their eager hosting; they also softened me out of their warm welcoming and pampering”

“The land of Iran was decorated with him; the back of the chivalrous persons became strong with him”<sup>33</sup>

There is a plenty of such poems in his book of poetry.

On the other hand, the people of Azerbaijan Republic are per se in possession of an Iranian identity. The thing flowing amidst the honorable people of Azerbaijan Republic clearly shows that they are willing in the first step to join the Islamic Iran and their second priority is the formation of an Islamic system drawn on the structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran<sup>34</sup>. The desire for the re-annexation of Azari tribe to Iran's soil is not a deniable issue that can be concealed. For example, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, 1919, all of the citizens of Nakhchivan gathered around in front of Iran's consulate and shouted “viva Iran” and “viva Iranian government” and demanded Iran's citizenship and appendment to their main homeland following the catastrophic massacre in which a large number of Muslims were skinned alive. The demonstration lasted several days<sup>35</sup>.

#### **Solutions for the Prevention of Azari Tribe's Ethnicism:**

No matter in what form, unrest is one of the most important devastative political, economic, cultural, security and social phenomena in every society. Unrest is always followed by potential threats against the national security and it emerges in various forms under such covers as turbulence and confusion, workers and people's protest, bombing, terror and so forth. Experiences have shown that one of the most prominent factors interrupting the national security due to the scattering of Iran's population is ethnicism, especially provocation of the tribal zeal of Azari tribe. Since geographical position, adjacency to the border and margin-dwelling of the tribes adds to the variable degree of damage and threat caused by ethnicities in regard of Iran's national security hence harms the social-national solidarity and coherence and, in case of the emergence of extreme ethnicism and creation of the related challenges and non-management of the situation by the rulers, Iran will be placed amongst the politically anxious countries. The ancient Azari tribe's has a lot in common in terms of religious, lingual and cultural identity with Turkey due to sharing border with it and any uproar may stimulate them to stand in lines against Iran and this sets the ground for the emergence of a larger political, social and ethnic gap. The present study proposes four primary areas, namely social, economic, political and cultural, for preserving the (domestic) security and fighting with the tribal and clan-based provocations (from outside) so as to present strategic, constructive and applied suggestions considering what was mentioned above parallel to the basic confrontation with the causes of ethnicity-related unrests and confusions.

#### **A) Domestic Solutions:**

1) **Cultural Aspect:** In order to create cultural mutual understanding and corroboration of the Azari tribes along with the other Iranian tribes, attentions should be paid in theory and practice to the exchange of thoughts and rendering prevalent the common cultural values such as reliance on the national heroes and Azari cavaliers who made a lot of efforts by life and heart for the sublimation of the name of Iran and made Iran proud and glorious with their faithfulness and courageousness; it is also necessary to commemorate for the name and memory of those Azari tribe's elders who have always introduced Azerbaijan as the inseparable part of Iran and any sort of anti-cultural action that leads to the racial and tribal discrepancies and causes the creation of disintegration in the national level should be strongly avoided.

In the meanwhile, emphasis and stress on the common religious root, i.e. Islam of the Shiism type thereof, amongst the Azari tribe and the vast majority of the Iranian nation, including the Persian-speaking tribes, has always been one of the most important factors of the preservation of the national unity in the course of the various historical

<sup>30</sup> Ferdowsi, “Shahnameh”, pp.338-434 as well as some other pages

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 166-201 and other pages

<sup>32</sup> Prayer by the king Saeed Ala'a Al-Din Kerp Arsalan, <https://ganjoor.net/nezami/5ganj/7peykar/sh/5>

<sup>33</sup> The letter by Iran's king to Bahram-e-Gour; <https://ganjoor.net/nezami/5ganj/7peykar/sh/16>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.khabaronline.ir/news/284774>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.magiran.com/article/11798767>

periods and this truth can be perceived in a brief review of Iran's history, particularly the contemporary period of Iran.

2) **Social Aspect:** The actualization of the mutual, close and respectful relations between Azari tribe and the other Iranian tribes hence the expansion of them as well as the intensification of the affectionate ties and warming the relationships and diversification of them in a completely socially interactive and constructive way are, of course, dependent on the establishment of the social justice and fair distribution of wealth and educational, civil and welfare facilities between all the Iranian tribes and the Azari tribe is no exception to this rule.

Political, social, economic and other kinds of integration and, in the meantime, authentication and veneration of the differences and the lingual and ethnic diversities through construction of a society without the smallest humiliation and insultation to the tribes should be exercised by all the general public in the society and it has to be also enacted as a legal requirement.

Any sort of the political and social controversy as a result of disrespecting the ethnicities and, especially, the Azerbaijan's people and Azari tribe should be avoided for, as shown by the experiences, they are formed through the domestic mass media (whether intentionally or mistakenly and inadvertently) and are occasionally expanded and this causes turmoil and disorder in national level as well as damages and deadly harms to the national security of Islamic republic of Iran; so, they should be completely removed and their grounds should be destroyed for the preservation of the social stability and national security and the doers of such stimulations and the perpetrators of such rebels should be decisively confronted and, more importantly, efforts should be made to remove the grounds and beds of such discrepancies' occurrence.

3) **Economic Aspect:** The corroboration of the economic interactions and the trades between the tribes should be industriously performed in line with the reduction of inequalities in local markets, fair distribution of the wealth and economic opportunities as well as the just economic development in the entire spots of the country and between all the ethnicities and, in one word, an approach should be adopted by the statesmen and stateswomen for equally treating all the ethnicities away from making any difference and distinction between the tribes and granting superiority to a given ethnicity because the existence of difference in the employment rate, housing problems, inflation and expensiveness and, generally, the economic and sustenance problems in various spots of the country and amidst the various ethnicities can per se alone exacerbate the unrests and chaos and the ethnic discrepancies and directly render shaky the national security and unity.

The statesmen and stateswomen should deal with the wants and supplying of the minimum needs of the society members' needs and various ethnicities without considering that they have been posited by a given tribe, saying Azari Tribe or others. Negligence of the legitimate wants of the ethnicities and non-offering of the fair and equal services are amongst the factors causing distrust and paving the way for the emergence of unrest and turmoil hence damaging the national security.

4) **Political Aspect:** Creation of a sense of national unity and deepening of the national zeal (being an Iranian) in the Azari tribe and full-scale promotion of unification with a political whole should be always the general and macro-level policy of Islamic Republic of Iran's statesmen. Corroboration of the interest in the homeland and separation of the destiny right from the right to have an independent country (autonomy), enhancement of the institutionalized political participation, avoidance of centralism and efforts for administrative decentralization in the capital and strengthening of the people-driven institutions in the Azari-dwelling regions can be amongst the most important factors giving rise to the operationalization of this policy; that is because the activities by the opponent and enemy groups can each set the ground for emergence of the turmoil and disordering of the national security; care should be exercised that these groups (that exercise enmity towards Islamic Republic of Iran) have always endeavored to take advantage of the potential existent in the ethnicities, especially extremist Pan-Turkism ethnicism amongst some Azari Tribe's nationalism activists for accomplishing their political goals and intentions (overthrowing and seeking independence) and make efforts to guide the Azari-speaking majority towards such objectives so as to contribute to the creation of instability in the Iranian society; thus, in order to create political and social justice, the statesmen should set the ground for the activity of these groups and frustrate them in their achievement of the anti-security and separatism goals for these groups (domestic enemy groups) rely on the foresaid grounds to advance their factional power and interests and are making efforts to navigate the Iranian society towards confusion and chaos.

It has to be noted in the meanwhile that the factors disordering the national security might have stemmed from Azari tribe's ethnicism in two aspects, namely domestic and external, which have occasionally been coordinated with one another. Thus, in order to preserve the national security, the main goal of the governance should be fighting with the foreigners' stimulations and external infiltrations and cessation of relationships with the enemies inside Iran and their stimulators outside Iran. In line with this, the pathology of the chaotic phenomena and confrontation with these cases along with finding the roots and causes of the crisis emergence outside the country as well as the discovery of



these bonds and serious confrontation with them should be placed atop of the security interventions' agenda devised by the governmental officials.

#### **E) External Solutions:**

Azerbaijan has always been greedily demanded and raided by the colonialist powers from the beginning of its establishment in the course of history and, especially, since 15<sup>th</sup> century that marks the emergence of the ominous phenomenon of colonialism. Colonialists do not withdraw from any effort for destroying and weakening the government and one of the enemy's techniques is the stimulation and support of the ethnic minorities considering the structure of Iran's populational properties. Due to the populational scattering and in racial terms, Iran is no exception to this rule. The foreign enemies have provided political and financial, media and informational supports and made promises like autonomy as well as stimulations like the wastage of the citizenship rights and neutrality of the notions and suggestions due to Azari tribe's being a minority and misused the negligence of the central government about the ethnicities' ideas and notions so as to keep on setting the ground for turmoil and clash inside Iran. In line with this, they have also applied advertisements and media campaigns such as cultural NATO and they are also using the foreign enemy media (soft overthrow), spies and intruded persons in the body of the organs and institutions and so forth so as to get their satanic thoughts accomplished. Besides the abovementioned cases, they have occasionally targeted the economic and social problems and other issues to weaken the social stability and turn the small crises into huge turmoil.

In order to repel the danger of the foreign stimulations aiming at the disordering of the national security through the use of the Azari Tribe's ethnicism capacity in Iran, several issues should be taken into consideration:

1) In the area of the foreign policy, the universal imperialists and the world's interventionist countries like the US should not be allowed to make interventions in Iran's domestic affairs via preserving the political independence and authority.

2) The various Iranian tribes form a unit political whole and this issue has to be taken into account in the international interactions by the politicians and the statesmen and stateswomen and, before discovering the connection chains of some of the deceived domestic elements with the foreigners, a pathological study should be simultaneously performed in line with the elimination of the barriers and problems of the tribes so as to figure out the reasons for the tribes' inclination towards the foreigners and the enemies' misuse of these ethnicities to eventually take steps in line with the public solidarity of the society.

3) The discovery of the chains connecting Iran's inside to outside through identification of the domestic treacherous elements that try to disorder Iran's national security through communicating with the foreign enemies and misusing every capacity and opportunity like the promulgation of Azari tribe's extreme ethnicity for the accomplishment of their goals.

4) Practical and smart fight with the American-Zionist conspiracy of Azerbaijan's independence through the universal imperialism's plots and ground-setting for declaration of independence for Iran's Azerbaijan under such a fake name as Southern Azerbaijan in match with such other term as northern Azerbaijan, i.e. Azerbaijan Republic, and informing the Azari tribe for staying conscious and avoiding the entrapment in the intrigues and schemes by foreign and sworn enemies of Islamic Iran.

#### **Conclusion**

National security and preservation of its stability is amongst the macro-level policies of Islamic Republic of Iran. Azari tribe is a stabilizing factor for this issue for the fact that efforts have been made for the intensive discovery of the roots of the subtle and deep interweaving between the Azari tribe and the Persian-speaking tribe and even other Iranian tribes after the Islamic revolution in Iran. Azari-speaking individuals could acquire sensitive and key governmental and security jobs and positions equal to those obtained by the Persian-speaking majority in Iran. The fact of the matter is that the ethnic sensitivities and, especially, the Azari tribe's ethnicism is not to the extent that it can appear as a serious and worrisome threat to the national security of Iran. In between, due to the existence of historical (Iranian), religious (Islam) and ideological (Shiism) commonalities between Azari tribe and the Persian-speaking majority and the spiritual interest in and fervor for Iran as well as the existence of the national zeal towards it and, more importantly, their resort to and following of the twelve immaculate Shiite Imams (may Allah hail on them) within the format of the Shiism along with the other Iranians, as the biggest fans of Shiism in the world, have made them both establish inseparable bonds which were more considerably and notably reinforced after the Islamic Revolution of Iran and per se became security-stabilizing factors for the national security of Iran.

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