

Review of: "The Evolution of Talysh Ethnic Identity: From Soviet Manipulation to Contemporary Reality"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Upon examining the scholarly framework and methodology employed in the article, it becomes evident that the author has engaged in comprehensive research, incorporating diverse methodologies such as field investigations, digital analysis, and the examination of historical records. This thorough approach facilitates a multifaceted exploration of the challenges and resilience of the Talysh people, enriching the discourse on ethnic identities within the post-Soviet geopolitical landscape. The author endeavors to make a significant contribution to the field by shedding light on the intricate dynamics of history, politics, and technology in the formation and perpetuation of ethnic identities.

Notwithstanding the strengths of the article, a critical limitation arises from the author's limited expertise concerning the Talysh region. The author attempts to elucidate the effects of forced deportations during the Soviet era on the demographic composition of the Talysh population in Soviet Azerbaijan, with a specific focus on the Yardimli region. Here, the author accurately notes the occurrence of forced deportations by Soviet authorities. However, the analysis falls short in recognizing that these deportations were not ethnically motivated, as evidenced by the personal testimony of individuals from the region, including those of Turkish ethnicity, such as the author's own family from the Köhnə Qışlaq village. This personal account challenges the assumption of an ethnic basis for the deportations and suggests a broader socio-political context. Additionally, the lack of Talysh language proficiency among the deportees' descendants, including the author's family, raises questions about the complexities of ethnic identity and language in the region.

The concept of "Iranised Turk," introduced by the author, does not resonate with known academic or local discourses. This discrepancy highlights a gap in the author's familiarity with the regional ethnic landscape. The enduring identification of Talysh as a distinct ethnic group, as recounted by the region's elders, underscores the nuanced interplay of language, religion, and coexistence, challenging simplistic narratives of assimilation and ethnic homogenization.

Therefore, while the article contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of ethnic identity in post-Soviet contexts, it also underscores the necessity of nuanced understanding and critical engagement with the complex histories and identities of the region's peoples.