

Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) Dataset Family



EPR-TEK

Transnational ethnic connections

Transborder Ethnic Kin (TEK) Groups Atlas

Version 2021

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Description

The Transborder Ethnic Kin (TEK) groups Atlas provides a brief description of all ethnic kin groups that live spread across two or more states. Each group comment indicates the name of the group, lists the countries where the group is, or was, politically relevant at some point in time since 1946, and describes the group’s common identifier.

Transborder ethnic kin groups are ethnic groups that have transnational connections across at least two states, because their settlement area is split by an international border. The TEK dataset identifies trans-border ethnic groups based on a matching of all ethnic groups included in the EPR dataset (Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010; Vogt et al. 2015).

The EPR-TEK Dataset constitutes a research-ready version of all TEK groups covering 1946 until 2021 in table format (Vogt et al. 2015). It can be downloaded at: <https://icr.ethz.ch/data/epr/tek/>.

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Adivasis (Indigenous tribes)

TEK code: 358

The term Adivasis generally refers to indigenous peoples of the Indian sub-continent (Minority Rights Group International 2018a), (Joshua Project 2018). These peoples form politically relevant entities in India, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Each country's group is made up of many distinct tribes speaking different languages and following different religious practices.

Their common identifier is their indigenous tribal status. Further, they are non-Hindus and, therefore, stand outside the Hindu caste systems prevailing in India and Nepal. In Bangladesh and in Nepal most tribal peoples practice Buddhism (Minority Rights Group International 2018a), (Hangen 2005, p. 60).

In India, the Scheduled Tribes – the political term for Adivasis – vary greatly in language and culture; there are over 200 distinct peoples speaking more than 100 languages. However, there are similarities in their way of life and the disadvantaged position within Indian society (Minority Rights Group International 2018b). These factors hold true for the tribal peoples in Bangladesh and Nepal as well.

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Adja

TEK code: 421

The Adja are politically relevant in Benin and Togo. In the latter country, they are part of the umbrella group of the Ewe, which encompasses several related subgroups. Further, they are related to the Fon, the largest ethnic group in Benin (Levinson 1998). The Adja transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language, called Adja, Aja, Ajagbe, or Hwè (Ethnologue 2015). While many have converted to Christianity, traditional religious practices and beliefs remain in use. However, religious affiliations cross-cut political units in both countries (Levinson 1998).

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Afar

TEK code: 445

The Afar, or Danakil, have a distinct cultural and linguistic identity and inhabit a well-defined territory of the Horn of Africa. The area is commonly referred to as the “Afar Triangle” and is divided between Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti (Yasin 2008, p. 42), (Levinson 1998, p. 125). The Afar are politically relevant in all three countries. They are pastoralists and speak Afar, a language of the Eastern Cushitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

Before they came under colonial rule, they were organized in a number of independent sultanates (Levinson 1998, p. 125). Further, their society is hierarchically divided into Asaimara (Red Men), the landowning, titled nobles, and the Adoimara (White Men), the lower-class tenants (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Allegiance to these distinct segments continue to be important in Afar society (Levinson 1998, p. 125). The Afar are Muslims and hold Islam in great esteem (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). However, their religious practices are lax and incorporate pre-Islamic beliefs (Levinson 1998, p. 125).

Transnational Afar nationalism has a long history. There have been several political movements since the second half of the 20th century aiming to achieve comprehensive Afar self-determination in the area (Yasin 2008, p. 42). However, they continue to suffer from political marginalization and discrimination in both Ethiopia and Eritrea (Minority Rights Group International 2018) (also see EPR). In Djibouti, where they are one of the mayor population groups, “they continue to be caught in the middle of both Ethiopian and Somali desires for control of Djibouti” (Levinson 1998, p. 126).

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African Americans

TEK code: 104

The African-Americans transnational ethnic group's identifier is their common ancestors and related heritage. As their ethnic name says, their origins are from African slaves, which were brought to the Americas in colonial times (Hollis Lynch 2017) (Skutsch 2005, p. 337). It should be noted that there are two black populations in Costa Rica. The first are the descendants of African slaves, which are now integrated in the Costa Rican society and “maintain no distinct black African cultural tradition, speaking Spanish and following the Catholic religion” (Skutsch 2005, p. 337). The second group has origins from the West Indies and Jamaica and only came to Costa Rica in the late nineteenth century. They speak Creole English, are of Protestant faith and mostly inhabit the Limon area (Skutsch 2005, p. 337). African-Americans speak English and Afro-Costa Ricans speak Creole English and Spanish (Costa Rica - Afro-Costa Ricans 2017) (Skutsch 2005, p. 337). Both are mostly of Christian faith, however African-Americans are mostly protestant, whereas Afro-Costa Ricans are mostly of Roman Catholic faith (Neha Sahgal and Greg Smith 2009) (Skutsch 2005, p. 337). African-American and most Afro-Costa Ricans share a common ancestry, but otherwise have adopted the language and religion of their respective countries.

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Akan

TEK code: 1007

The Akan are a linguistically defined transnational ethnic kin group in Western Africa (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019), (Levinson 1998, pp. 123, 136). All subgroups speak interrelated Akan languages of the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo language family (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

Most Akan peoples live in Ghana, where they settled between the 11th and 18th centuries, while others inhabit the eastern part of Côte d'Ivoire and parts of Togo (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). The politically relevant Akan subgroups encompass the Asante in Ghana and the Baule in Côte d'Ivoire as well as residual "Other Akans" groups in both countries.

All of them have an illustrious history in common including the former Fante and Asante kingdoms, which they are proud of (Levinson 1998, pp. 123, 136). While most Akan peoples are Christian (Joshua Project 2019), their rulers have kept up the indigenous religious traditions (Levinson 1998, pp. 123, 136). The differences in religion cross-cut political units.

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Alawis

TEK code: 305

The Alawis are a politically relevant group in Syria and Lebanon. They predominantly live in Syria, where they are a religious minority and the ruling political elite, as well as in the southeast of Turkey and in Lebanon (Asatryan 2013, p. 29). In Syria, their ancestral heartlands lie in the coastal part of northwest Syria. Sizeable communities further live on the inland plains of Homs and Hama (Minority Rights Group International 2018). The Alawi transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common religion, which is a distinct form of Shi'i Islam. Originally, they were called Nusayris, after their eponymous founder Muhammad ibn Nusayr, who lived in the second half of the ninth century. Despite common elements between Alawi teachings and mainstream Islam (especially in its Shi'i form), many of their beliefs have appeared scandalous to both Shi'i and Sunni Muslims, who have consistently accused them of heresy and immoral practices (Asatryan 2013, p. 29). The Alawi sect has become politically dominant in Syria, particularly since 1971, when Hafiz al-Assad, an Alawi, became president of the country after a series of military coups (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). With his son Bashar in power since Hafiz al-Assad's death in 2000, the group keeps its dominant role in Syrian politics and plays a crucial role in the current civil conflict.

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Albanians

TEK code: 203

The Albanians currently are politically relevant in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as in the previously existing states Serbia and Montenegro and Yugoslavia. Albanians settle in further countries in the Balkans and beyond, where they, however, do not seek political representation at the state-level. The Albanian transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language. The differences in terms of dialect (Tosk in the South and Gege in the North) or religion (Muslims, Christians and Atheists) cross-cut political units. Besides these differences, the Albanians have a long history of common group identification, in particular to distinguish themselves from powerful foreign rulers, such as the Ottomans or the Serbs (see e.g. Schmitt 2012; Draper 1997). Yet, the idea of "Greater Albania", a state that unifies all ethnic Albanians, receives little support among the political leaders of the Albanian segments (Hilaj 2013, p. 412).

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American Indians

TEK code: 123

Today, the term “American Indian” includes a “member of any of the aboriginal peoples of the Western Hemisphere” (Elizabeth Prine Pauls 2017). The common identifier of this transnational ethnic group is their shared history and common ancestry. Their ancestors came from “Asia to North America during the last ice age; from approximately 30,000–12,000 years ago”. This was possible, since at the time sea levels were low and a land bridge emerged. Then the groups either followed the Pacific coast southward or went to present-day Canada (Elizabeth Prine Pauls 2017). Between the sixteenth and seventeenth century their lands were invaded by Spanish, French, Dutch and British conquerors (Minority Rights Group International 2009). As Mashford-Pringle argues, aboriginal peoples from Canada and the USA “have struggled through similar historical experiences, which were formulated to assimilate or eradicate them from the ‘new world’” (Mashford-Pringle 2011, p. 153). The Native Americans can’t be considered as a homogenous group, but as “members of hundreds of nations with different linguistic, social, cultural and economic traits.” Hence, it is not possible to use a common language as an identifier. Additionally, in the USA “72 per cent of Native Americans speak English at home” (Minority Rights Group International 2009). Similarly, the indigenous peoples of the USA and Canada (and even within those countries) don’t share the same traditional religious beliefs and today the majority has converted to Christianity (Minority Rights Group International 2009). Champagne argues that American Indians don’t form an ethnic group, but “are composed of thousands of independent nations, communities, and cultures that have very different and specific identities” and they shouldn’t be homogenized. He argues that the term “American Indian” describes a group who occupies a “similar political, cultural, and economic niches in relation to mainstream U.S. society”. Hence, a further common identifier of the American Indians is their relation to the US and Canadian mainstream society (Duane Champagne 2014). They still tend to be poorer and there are health disparities in comparison to the general US population (Minority Rights Group International 2009).

Within the American Indians are transnational umbrella groups like the Iroquois. The Iroquois are an umbrella group including “any member of the North American Indian tribes speaking a language of the Iroquoian family”, which indicates that a common language family is the group’s identifier (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). The same considerations apply to the numerous tribes appertaining to the Algonquian language family (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017).

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Anuak

TEK code: 908

The Anuak, also called Anyuak or Anywa, form politically relevant minority groups in Ethiopia and South Sudan. They share a common language and ancestry (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Their language is similarly called Anuak and belongs to the “Luo”- branch of the Nilo-Saharan language group (Ethnologue 2019).

The Ethiopian Anuak reportedly have a wider political organization than their South Sudanese kin people because more dry ground is available to them, resulting in more closely connected villages (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). They live in forested savannas and along streams in the highlands of the state of Gambella, which borders South Sudan, and traditionally have followed a royal clan and a king (Human Rights Watch 2012). The Anuak in South Sudan also occupy high ground in savanna grasslands along riverbanks but live in autonomous villages. A particularity to their lifestyle is that separate wet- and dry-season villages are maintained due to the annual flooding of their settlements (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

In Ethiopia, the Anuak have experienced government persecution and forced resettlement as well as conflicts with other ethnic groups of the region, especially the Nuer. Some fled to South Sudan, where they live in refugee camps (Human Rights Watch 2012).

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Armenians

TEK code: 204

In addition to their presence in Armenia, Armenians are currently politically relevant ethnic groups in Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran, and the Lebanon.

For over 3000 years, Armenians form a distinct ethnic group in southeastern Europe (Levinson 1998, p. 9). The most significant identifiers of the transnational ethnic group of Armenians are their religion, the language as well as distinct cultural elements. With regard to their culture, Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 9) emphasizes the large, extended family networks and deep literary and artistic networks.

The Armenian language belongs to the family of Indo-European languages. It is classified as an independent language branch therein and is spoken in a variety of dialects (Andrzej Pisowicz 2007). Armenians are predominantly adhering to the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church, which is considered as a unifying force. In fact, Armenia is considered as the first Christian nation as the state has been established between A.D. 301 and 330 (Levinson 1998, p. 9). However, despite this homogeneity, Armenians can further be divided into Armenian Orthodox and Armenian Catholics. This division is particularly pronounced in the Lebanon.

The issue of Nagorno-Karabakh frequently leads to a high level of nationalist rhetoric that divides Armenians and Azerbaijani nationalists in Azerbaijan. The predominantly ethnic Armenians repeatedly expressed their support for independence or union with Armenia (Minorities at Risk 2006).

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Assyrians

TEK code: 1000

The Assyrians are politically relevant in Iran, Armenia, and Iraq, where they form distinct tribal and peasant communities (Minority Rights Group International 2018). Their common identifiers are the shared ancestry, language, and religion. The Assyrians are descendants of ancient Mesopotamian peoples, speak Aramaic and belong to one of four Christian churches: the Chaldean (Uniate), Nestorian, Jacobite or Syrian Orthodox, and the Syrian Catholic (Minority Rights Group International 2018; Encyclopaedia Iranica, II/8 2018). Religion is the Assyrian transnational ethnic group's most important marker since their culture and way of life are dictated by their beliefs (Joshua Project 2018). This clearly distinguishes them from other groups in their respective countries.

Assyrians have migrated to other parts of the world such as the Caucasus, North America and Western Europe during the past century (Joshua Project 2018). However, there they do not seek political representation at the state-level.

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Aymara

TEK code: 117

The Aymaran transnational ethnic group's common identifier is their language, called Aymara (Moseley 2007, pp. 112–113). While the Aymara are culturally related to the Quechua, "their languages are unrelated". The Aymara, "as an exception from Inca practice, were allowed to retain their own language" (instead of Quechua) during the Inca Empire (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). Today, the majority of Aymaras is Roman Catholic, however they also maintain traditional beliefs, which creates a mixture of "of Catholicism and indigenous religion". They believe in spirits, which inhabit rivers, mountains and natural forces (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996; World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). Magicians are seen as "intermediaries between the natural and supernatural spheres" (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). Pachamama, Mother Earth, is the most important deity and offerings are made to her during ceremonies and religious festivals (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). Concerning their social organisation, the norm of reciprocity is important. It is "the basic and most salient feature of all Aymara social relations" and it "is culturally institutionalized in several systems (e.g., those of ayni, compadrazgo, and fiesta)" (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). Another specificity is the use of time in their language, since "the past lies ahead and the future lies behind" (Laura Spinney 2005). From a cultural perspective, the Aymara have traditional dances, traditional music and are skilled weavers (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). The Aymara pollera skirt is a distinctive sign worn by Aymara women (Skutsch 2005, p. 991).

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Azande

TEK code: 441

The Azande live partly in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic in the area extending across the Nile-Congo drainage divide (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). They are politically relevant in South Sudan (former Sudan) and Congo, DRC.

The Azande transnational ethnic kin group speaks a common language of the Adamawa-Ubangi branch of the Niger-Congo language family (Ethnologue 2019). The group consists of an amalgam of groups that were conquered and overpowered by a people calling themselves Ambomu in the 18th century (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

They adhere to traditional religions and Christianity (Ethnologue 2019). Differences in religion, however, cross-cut political units.

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Azeri

TEK code: 205

Azeri, also referred to as Azerbaijanis, are currently politically relevant ethnic groups in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran and Russia. Most of the Azeri live in Iran, which is followed by Azerbaijan.

The most significant identifier of the Azeri identity is the culture and ethnicity according to Minahan (Minahan 2014, p. 17). The culture of the Azeri, which has historically been influenced by Turkish and Iranian traditions, combines western and eastern elements (Minahan 2014, p. 17). The recent unequal economic development in Iran and Azerbaijan intensified cultural differences among the Azeri. While elements of a Western consumer society increasingly spread in Azerbaijan, the Azeri in Iran remain culturally more conservative (Minahan 2014, p. 17). Despite these divisions, however, the Azeri populations of the two countries continue to maintain close connections (Minahan 2014, p. 20).

Azeri in Azerbaijan and Iran speak the Azeri language. Azeri is a Turkish language, more specifically, the language can be located within the group of the Oghuz language (Minahan 2014, p. 16). In Iran, the language is written in Perso-Arabic script and the dialect is called Azerbaijani South. In Azerbaijan, the language is written in a modified Latin alphabet and the dialect is referred to as Azerbaijani North (Minahan 2014, p. 16).

Azeri are predominantly Muslims. A majority of Azeri are Shi'a Muslims with most of them adhering to the Jafari sect. About a fourth of the Azeri are Sunni Muslim (Levinson 1998, p. 201). Religion, however, is not considered as the key identifying factor behind the Azeri identity (Minahan 2014, p. 17). Moreover, it should be noted that the Soviet era and the anti-religious propaganda during contributed to significant numbers of atheist or so-called cultural Muslim, a term referring to those Azeri with no religious affiliation (Minahan 2014, pp. 16–17).

According to Minahan (Minahan 2014, p. 20) there are still some political groups that “continue to work for the unification” of the Azeri population “in one sovereign republic”.

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Bakongo

TEK code: 401

One common identifier of the Bakongo is their language called Kikongo (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2010). However, the Bakongo speak various Kikongo dialects and “some can hardly be understood by speakers of other dialects”. This has prompted the government of the former Zaire (today DRC), to create a “standardized version of the language”, which is called Mono Kotuba (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). In the Republic of the Congo, the Lari are a subgroup of the Bakongo and they speak Lari (Ethnologue 2017), (Minority Rights Group International 2017).

The Bakongo also have their own traditional belief system, but they “were among the first sub-Saharan African peoples to adopt Christianity”. Their traditional belief system includes Nzambe, the creator of the universe, who lives “above a world of ancestor spirits” (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). He was “the supreme god for all in the Kongo kingdom”. The spirits can be represented in objects called nkisi (Gateway Africa unknown). The Bakongo religion is focused on ancestors and spirits (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2010). Other important elements include sorcerers using fetishes (nkisi) and traditional healers (nganga) and their herbal treatments. A relatively important sect among the Bakongo is the Kimbangu church, based on Simon Kimbangu. It is based on Christianity and opposes sorcery, fetishes and polygamy (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017).

The Bakongo also share a cultural heritage, a large part of which is based on the Kongo kingdom (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2010), (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). The Bakongo art includes large statues representing their chief, oral and written literature, a tradition of “woodcarving, sculpting, painting, and stonework”. As mentioned, fetish objects called nkisi were of great religious importance. Hence the carving and sculpting of the nkisi objects are an important element of Bankongo art (Gateway Africa unknown), (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017).

On a societal level, the Bakongo are matrilineal, which means that descent is given through the female line and the maternal uncle plays an important role in the life of his nephews and nieces (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2010), (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). Bakongo women “are noted (sometimes with animosity) for their enterprise in cash-cropping and especially in trade” (Minority Rights Group International 2017).

Finally, the Bakongo also have a shared history, especially based on the ancient Kongo kingdom (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). The kingdom was founded in 1390, but its demise started with invasions by neighbouring groups (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). “By the end of the sixteenth century [...] it had virtually ceased to exist” and Portu-

gal took control of the kingdom. During the 1884-885 Conference of Berlin the European colonial powers split up the Kongo kingdom among the Portuguese, France and Belgium (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). Nevertheless, Kongo nationalism and culture reappeared in the twentieth century, demands for independence were made and political and religious movements were created. Among those groups are secessionist movements demanding independence for the Bakongo in a federal state, comprising the “southern Congo, the Angolan enclave of Cabinda, the lower province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Congo-Kinshasa, formerly Zaire), and northern Angola“. Consequently those movements don’t recognize the division of the Kongo kingdom at the Berlin Conference. For example, in Angola the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) not only opposed the Portuguese colonizers, but also the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) regime. The FNLA, founded by Holden Roberto, originally desired the reunification of the Bakongo as during the Kongo kingdom (Minorities at Risk Project 2007). Bakongo secessionist movements faced repressions before and after independence, as represented by the numerous refugees to Zaire (DRC today) in 1961 and the “Bloody Friday” in January 1993, where 4000 to 6000 Bakongo were killed (GlobalSecurity.org n.d.), (Minorities at Risk Project 2007), (Minority Rights Group International 2017), (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017).

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Baloch

TEK code: 362

The Baloch transnational ethnic group's identity is based on their shared ancestry and the common language (see remark below). They are a group of tribes speaking the Balochi language in the province of Balochistan in Pakistan and also neighbouring areas of Iran and Afghanistan (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018a). In Pakistan, where the majority of the group lives, the Baloch people are divided into two groups, the Sulaimani and the Makrani (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018a). They profess Islam, most are adherents to Sunni faith (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

They are politically relevant in all three countries they inhabit. Their strong awareness of their ethnic identity has resulted in several rebellions against their respective national governments in a bid to maintain their autonomy. There has been a strong Baloch pull for self-determination with view to the formation of an independent Balochistan, but these demands have gradually faded through sustained political repression at the hands of Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan (Minority Rights Group International 2018). Baloch groups with nationalist goals still operate in Pakistan, most of which are branded as terrorist organizations due to their violent means (U.S. Department of State 2016).

Remark: The Pakistani province of Balochistan is also inhabited by a group of Brahui tribes who are usually viewed as part of the Baloch ethnicity even if they speak a different language ("Brauhi") (see e.g. (Minorities At Risk Project 2006)). Apart from their settlement area, they further share the same phenotypic features as well as the Sunni faith of the Baloch (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018b).

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Basques

TEK code: 206

Basques are politically relevant ethnic groups in Spain and France. The Basques live in the northern and southern parts of the Western Pyrenees. The most significant identifier of the Basques is their language, called Basque or Euskara (Levinson 1998, p. 81). The language, which counts as the only non-Indo-European language of Europe, has for centuries distinguished Basques from the neighbouring groups and therefore served as an important ethnic identifier (Beck 2011, p. 38). While repression under General Franco's dictatorship has threatened the Basque language, it has "experienced a remarkable revival" throughout the last decades according to Beck (Beck 2011, pp. 40–1).

Most Basques adhere to Roman Catholicism (Levinson 1998, p. 81). However, according to Beck (Beck 2011, p. 38), secularization grows among the Basques. In addressing the unique sense of the Basque identity, Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 81) further emphasizes the long residence in the area; long resistance to outside rule; as well as the Basque culture. Focusing on Basque culture, Beck (Beck 2011, p. 41), lists a number of habits and institutions that have "survived exposure of French and Spanish culture", such as sport games, gastronomic societies and poetry forms.

There is no common political will with regard to the political status among the French Basques. According to an assessment in the Minorities at Risk database (Minorities at Risk 2006), some seek more cultural autonomy, while only a few advocate for a separate Basque state, which consequently would include unification with the Spanish Basques. In general terms however, nationalist mobilization in the French part is much weaker than in the Spanish part (Beck 2011, p. 42).

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Bateke

TEK code: 424

The Bateke are politically relevant in Gabon and Congo (Brazzaville). National borders have split their traditional territory between Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). In the Democratic Republic of Congo, however, they don't seek political representation at the state level. In Gabon, they are part of the Mbede umbrella group, which is actually an ethnolinguistic category with a number of subgroups such as the Bateke speaking related languages (Levinson 1998, p. 134). Their shared language is the Bateke transnational ethnic group's identifier. There are no reports of politically relevant connections across borders within the group.

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Belarusians

TEK code: 209

The Belarusians, also referred to as Byelorussians, are politically relevant ethnic groups in Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, and Russia.

The main ethnic identifiers of the group of Belarusians are the language, customs and culture. While their history can be traced back to the 6th century CE, it was already about the end of the 12th century “[when] Belarusians became distinct from their neighbours in language, customs, and material culture” following Nikolov (Nikolov 2011, p. 44).

Belarusians speak Belarusian, a language that belongs to the Slavic language group. Belarusian is closely related to the Russian and Ukrainian language (Levinson 1998, p. 12). However, it is a separate language, a fact which is considered as a crucial feature of national consciousness (Nikolov 2011, p. 44). Other important identifiers are distinct religious ceremonies, a type of folk music and cultural practices (Levinson 1998, p. 12).

Byelorussians are predominantly adherents of Eastern Orthodoxy (Levinson 1998, p. 12). However, it should be noted that adherence to Catholicism and Uniat, an Eastern Rite, is common among Belarusians particularly in northern areas of Belarus (Nikolov 2011, p. 43).

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Bengali

TEK code: 352

The Bengali are politically relevant in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. Their common identifier is the Bengali language, called Bangla, which belongs to the Indo-Aryan languages (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Bangla speakers are the majority population of Bengal, the region of South Asia that roughly corresponds to the country of Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Their strong literary tradition is "a source of considerable pride" to this group (Levinson 1998, pp. 204–205). They derive from various origins (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018) and are a large heterogeneous group today in cultural, social and political terms. Religion poses an important cross-cutting cleavage within the group as there are Bengali Muslims, Bengali Hindus, Bengali Christians, and Bengali Buddhists (Levinson 1998, pp. 204–205),(Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018), (Wikipedia 2018).

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Berbers

TEK code: 416

The Berbers are a politically relevant group in Morocco, Mali, Niger, Algeria and Libya. They are the earliest known inhabitants of North Africa and are spread out from Egypt to Morocco and southwards throughout the Sahara Desert and the adjacent Sahel strip. Further to the group's shared ancestry – the Berber transnational ethnic group's identifier – the majority follows Islam, which was introduced by Arab invaders in the seventh century. The Berber language, also called Berber, has over twenty different dialects. Many Berbers also speak Arabic, as well as French or Spanish. Apart from these commonalities, they constitute a diverse group of separate tribal societies. (Group 2000, pp. 53–55).

The Tuareg are often considered a separate tribal society from the Berbers. Yet they share the Berber ancestry and also follow Islam. They traditionally lived a nomadic lifestyle in the Sahara and their social structures were shaped by strict hierarchical classes. They speak the Berber language of Tamacheq, which is written in a script called Tifnagh (other Berbers use the Arabic script) (Group 2000, pp. 207–208).

The political relevance of this group mainly stems from repression at the hands of their respective national governments which sometimes resulted in violent conflicts between the Berbers and other inhabitants of the region, mainly the dominating Arabs (see EPR comments).

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Biharis

TEK code: 361

The Bihari transnational ethnic group's identifiers are the common language (Urdu), religion (Islam), and most importantly their recent history. They are politically relevant in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

The Biharis are Muslims of various origins that emigrated from the Indian province of Bihar to Pakistan in the 1948 division of the subcontinent. In Pakistan, they belong to the Mohajir group, an amalgamation of various migrant communities. After independence of Bangladesh in 1971, several hundred thousands of the Urdu-speaking Biharis were stranded in Bengali-speaking Bangladesh. They were denied Bangladeshi citizenship, as many had sided with and initially sought repatriation to Pakistan (Freedom House 2011). Meanwhile, Pakistan refused to repatriate the community. They remained stateless until 2008, when a Supreme Court ruling recognized their right to Bangladeshi nationality (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

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Bosniaks

TEK code: 207

Bosniaks are currently politically relevant ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, and the Kosovo. They were also relevant in the former state of Serbia and Montenegro.

According to Moe (Moe 2011, p. 47), the main ethnic identifiers are their religion and the identification with Ottoman cultural tradition. In contrast to the dominance of Orthodox and Roman Catholicism among Croats and Serbs in the region, Bosniaks are Muslims (Levinson 1998, p. 15). More specifically, most Bosniaks are Sunni Muslim and adhere to the Hanafi School. To be precise, it should be noted that nowadays, there is a co-existence of non-practising secularists, moderate but traditional followers and more rigid adherents of radical religious schools (Moe 2011, pp. 48–9). Historically, many Bosniaks have been urban traders and craftsmen (Moe 2011, p. 49), a pattern that continues to exist according to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 15).

The language of the Bosniaks, referred to as Bosnian, is similar to Serbo-Croatian. The Bosnian language contains “words added from Turkish, reflecting Ottoman rule of the region from the 15th century to the early 20th century” (Levinson 1998, p. 15). Importantly, it is the Bosnian language that “distinguishes Bosnians from other Muslim communities in the former Yugoslavia”, such as for example Albanians or Macedonians (Moe 2011, p. 47).

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British Protestants

TEK code: 280

The British Protestants are politically relevant in the United Kingdom as well as in former British colonies, where they emigrated to throughout the past centuries. These countries are Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Australia and New Zealand. Due to the ample colonial history of the British, they settled in other parts of the world as well, especially in North America, where they, however, do not seek political representation at the state-level since 1946 or only constitute a small part of a larger group in EPR. Their common identifiers are their religious denomination, as well as their language (English) and their ancestry. The latter two identifiers are especially relevant in the former colonies, where their ethnicity is not primarily defined in terms of religion, but in their shared ancestry and phenotypical features which makes them an integral part of the group "Whites" (sources see EPR core dataset and (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

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Buddhist Arakanese

TEK code: 609

The Buddhist Arakanese live in Rakhine state, one of the ethnic minority states of Myanmar, and speak a dialect related to the Burmese language (Ekeh, Chizom and Smith, Martin 2007). They have a distinctive culture and identity, which spurred ethnic grievances and tensions with the central government continuing until the present day (Ekeh, Chizom and Smith, Martin 2007). On the other hand, the Buddhist Arakanese view themselves as the indigenous group of their state, “being overrun” by the Muslim Rohingya, which are viewed as foreign Bengalis by many in Myanmar. The Buddhists Arakanese appear to have targeted the Rohingya in collaboration with government security forces while becoming displaced themselves (Staniland, Paul 2017).

The Buddhist Arakanese group of Myanmar has transnational ethnic kinship ties to the Marma, a subgroup of the “Tribal-Buddhist” group of Bangladesh. The Marma have long settled in the south-eastern region of Bengal as well as in Rakhine state. Those settling in the latter area, the “Rakhaing Marma”, immigrated to Bangladesh toward the end of the 18th century, when their kingdom was conquered by the Burmese (Encycopaedia Britannica 2019). Subsequently, most of the Marma came under Bengali influence, but in the south of the Chittagong Hills region, their script and dress are Burmese and the language an Arakanese dialect. These Arakanese-speaking Marma follow animistic Buddhism (Encycopaedia Britannica 2019). Thus, the identifiers of this transnational ethnic kin group are the shared language and religion.

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Bulgarians

TEK code: 208

Bulgarians are politically relevant ethnic groups in Bulgaria and Moldova. According to Frusetta (Frusetta 2011, p. 55), culture is an important ethnic identifier of the Bulgarians as they “have historically defined themselves in opposition to aspects of Greek, Turkish, and Romanian culture”.

Bulgarians are Slavic people, thus culturally related to the Serbs (Frusetta 2011, p. 55). Bulgarians speak Bulgarian, a South Slavic language. They are predominantly adherents of the Orthodox Christian Church which persisted despite secularization during the socialist era (Frusetta 2011, p. 57). In addition, some indigenous beliefs continue to coexist alongside the Christian beliefs, particularly in communities spread in rural areas (Levinson 1998, p. 17). It should also be noted that since recently there are also smaller communities of Protestant, Catholic and Muslim Bulgarians (Frusetta 2011, p. 57).

The long history of the Bulgarians, whose presence in the Balkans can be traced back at least to the 7th century (Frusetta 2011, p. 55), is another important aspect of the ethnic identity.

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Cape Verdeans

TEK code: 1002

Ethnicity is not politicized in Cape Verde and thus, the “Cape Verdeans” encompass the islands’ entire population. The overwhelming majority of them is of mixed European and African descent. Further, there are segments of the population which are of pure African or European origin and a substantial number trace their roots to Sephardic Jews who were expelled from the Iberian Peninsula in the 15th and 16th centuries (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a).

Moreover, the Cape Verdeans were politically relevant in Guinea-Bissau from 1974 to 1980, as the Portuguese colonial rulers installed them as the administrative elite upon the country’s independence (Forrest 1992). The Cape Verdean minority in Guinea-Bissau is also of mixed origin from African, European, Lebanese, and Jewish ancestors (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b). As they trace their more recent history back to the islands of Cape Verde, shared ancestry is this transnational ethnic kin group’s identifier.

Although Portuguese is the official language in both countries, “Crioulo”, one of the oldest of the Portuguese creole languages, is by far the most widely spoken in Cape Verde (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a) and functions as a lingua franca in Guinea-Bissau (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b). Today, the Cape Verdean diaspora is spread to the European, African and American continents, with a significant population in the United States (Joshua Project 2019), where they, however, do not seek political representation at the national level. The Cape Verdeans are mainly Christians (Joshua Project 2019), however, differences in terms of faith (Catholics, Protestants, Muslims) cross-cut political units. Today, virtually none of the Cape Verdeans who can trace Jewish ancestry are practicing Jews citebritannica19a.

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Central Tai speakers

TEK code: 529

The speakers of the Central branch of the Tai language family are politically relevant in China and Vietnam. As the name implies, this transnational ethnic kin group is defined based on interrelated languages spoken by the Zhuang in Southern China as well as the Tay and Nung in Northern Vietnam (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a). Note that the dialects known officially in China as the “Northern dialect of the Zhuang language” technically belong to the Northern branch of the Tai language family. Yet, they are still closely related to the other dialects (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b). Further, the name Tho is sometimes used for the languages now known in Vietnam as Tay (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a).

The Zhuang are South China’s largest minority group. Most of them live in the Zhuang Autonomous Region of Guangxi, close to the border with Vietnam. They are also found in national autonomous areas in neighbouring Yunnan and Guangdong. They depend mainly on rice cultivation for their livelihood (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019c). The Tay and Nung in the adjacent mountainous areas in Vietnam have similar lifestyles (Joshua Project 2019a), (Joshua Project 2019b).

The Central Tai speakers predominantly adhere to traditional shamanic religious practices (Joshua Project 2019c). Kao (Ya-ning 2014) found that the Zhuang people along the Sino-Vietnamese border carry out shamanic rituals “to make offerings to a powerful chief-turned-deity, Nong Zhigao, and his wife”. At the same time, a series of projects conducted by Zhuang officials, scholars and business persons on the Chinese side of the border aim to standardize a Zhuang religion. According to Kao (Ya-ning 2014, p. 135), these are both strategies to guarantee the survival of indigenous beliefs despite repressive policies of the Chinese government. Thus, central and local governments allow the display of, and even encourage the transformation of, local cults that can be harnessed to attract tourists or worshippers.

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Chinese

TEK code: 500

The Chinese, or Han, are the politically dominant group in China, forming “the great homogeneous mass of the Chinese people, sharing the same culture, the same traditions, and the same written language” (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). They are further politically relevant in many East Asian countries (Taiwan, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia) as well as in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

The Chinese transnational ethnic kin group’s main identifiers are the common ancestry and the Chinese language, which is spoken in its varieties as a native language by more people than any other language in the world (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). As the bulk of Chinese are non-religious (Joshua Project 2019), religious affiliations are not a salient marker for this group.

The Chinese diaspora is spread around the globe, albeit three of the four countries with the largest numbers of Chinese are in Asia, namely Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia, followed by the United States (Poston and Wong 2016, pp. 362–363). Chinese migration has a very long history, dating back to the Qin Dynasty, more than 2000 years ago (Poston and Wong 2016, p. 351). The Chinese have had, and continue to have, important and significant influences in many of their host countries (Poston and Wong 2016, p. 369), as is demonstrated by the long list of countries where they are politically relevant.

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Chins

TEK code: 351

The Chin people are one of the ethnic nationalities in Myanmar, living primarily in Chin state, which is named after the group. They are not a single group, but are composed of a number of ethnic groups such as the Asho, Cho, Khumi, Kuki, Laimi, Lushai and Zomi, each with their own language (Minority Rights Group International 2018). Their common identifier with the neighbouring Mizo group of India are their related Tibeto-Burman languages as well as cultural practices. They practice polygyny and trace their descent through the paternal line; young people are expected to marry outside the paternal clan (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

In terms of religion, it is reported that perhaps 80 per cent of the Chin are Christians, while most of the remaining population are Buddhists or animists with a small Jewish sect as well (Minority Rights Group International 2018). Thus, religion poses a cross-cutting factor in this heterogenous group.

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Choco (Embera-Wounan)

TEK code: 110

The Embera speak Embera languages and the Wounan speak Wounan languages, which are both part of the Choco language family (The Editors of Encycloaedia Britannica 1999). Hence, the group's identifier is a common language group and linguistic family. The Embera and Wounan also "agree on a common identity based on cultural heritage and theories on creation" (Minority Rights Group International 2017). They also share religious beliefs in good and evil spirits, gods and spirits related to water, witchcraft and shamans play an important role. However it needs to be mentioned that missionary activities changed their religious beliefs towards Christianity (UNESCO unknown; World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). Other shared elements include hunting with bow and arrow, female genital mutilation in Embera culture and their clothing. Men, when not in towns, wear loin cloths and women "wear brightly colored cloth wrapped at the waist as a skirt" and "do not cover their torsos, and wear long, straight black hair. The children go naked until puberty, and no one wears shoes." They also paint their bodies, both for repelling insects and for special occasions (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996; Anastasia Moloney 2015; Native Planet 2000; The Editors of Encycloaedia Britannica 1999).

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Christians in the Middle East

TEK code: 306

In the contemporary Middle East, politically relevant Christian populations live in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan. They belong to various Christian traditions such as the Orthodox, Catholic or Coptic churches. Despite their peculiarities, the transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common religion and the fact that they are minorities in the Muslim majority nations of the Middle East. Christians settle in further countries in the Middle East, where they, however, do not seek political representation at the state-level.

According to the theological distinction between Eastern and Western Christianity, reflecting its emergence in different world regions and differences in languages and rites in the early church (Fitzgerald 2005), most groups with this TEK-link belong to Eastern Christian traditions. They emerged in places outside of Europe and in the Middle East especially. However, Protestantism for example – a branch of Western Christian faith – exists in Lebanon as well, so the lines of this distinction are blurred. Furthermore, the branches of Eastern Christianity predominant in the Middle East are very distinct among themselves and sometimes closer to European churches than to each other (Fitzgerald 2005).

This TEK group is restricted to Christians of predominantly Arab Middle Eastern countries. However, while their Muslim compatriots often call on their Arab ancestry, Christians tend to identify stronger with their religious identity and have ambiguous attitudes towards Arab identity. The Copts in Egypt, for example, are in language, dress, and way of life indistinguishable from Muslim Egyptians but traditionally did not identify as Arabs (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). On the other hand, the Orthodox in Lebanon played a major role in the Arab nationalist, literary and cultural revival of the 19th and 20th centuries. They seized the idea of Greater Syria as a multi-confessional world in which they could play a significant role (Minority Rights Group International 2018). Meanwhile, the Armenians immigrated to Lebanon within the last two centuries and are not considered Arabs at all nor do they identify as such (Joshua Project 2018).

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Croats

TEK code: 210

Croats, also referred to as Croatians, are politically relevant ethnic groups in Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Slovenia. The ethnic group was also politically relevant in the former Serbia and Montenegro.

The main ethnic identifier of the Croats is their religion. Most Croats adhere to Roman Catholicism. According to Čapo(Čapo and Zrnić 2011, p. 88), it is the Croats' adherence to Roman Catholicism that "has long differentiated them from the Orthodox Serbs and other eastern neighbors as well as the Muslim Bosniaks". Culturally, another distinguishing feature is that the ethnic group of Croats was more influenced by Western Europe than other groups in the region, which is reflected in education, art, science and the literature (Levinson 1998, p. 19).

Croats speak Croatian. Croatian is a South Slavic language that is written in a Latin alphabet (Čapo and Zrnić 2011, p. 88). In other accounts (Levinson 1998, p. 19), Croatian is also portrayed as a distinct dialect of the Serbo-Croatian language which emphasizes the similarity to the Serbian language.

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Dalits

TEK code: 357

The Dalits are politically relevant in Nepal and India. They are low-caste Hindus of the Scheduled Caste, also referred to as “the Untouchables” (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Thus, the Dalit transnational ethnic group’s identifiers are their Hindu faith and their social standing in the caste system. Due to their traditional standing in Hindu society, social and economic discrimination against Dalits is widespread both in Nepal (U.S. Department of State 2017) and in India (Minority Rights Group International 2018), even though it is constitutionally illegal. Both countries adopted measures to emancipate these vulnerable groups, yet the Dalits continue to live in underdeveloped rural areas or slums (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

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Dayak

TEK code: 501

The Dayak comprise several indigenous peoples of the island of Borneo. They are politically relevant in Malaysia and Indonesia. Their common identifiers are interrelated languages as well as their lifestyles and traditions. The Dayak generally grow rice and adhere to “adat”, traditional laws and customs which, however, are under attack by modern economic and political changes in the region (Levinson 1998).

Further, the Dayak are distinct from other Indonesian groups in religious terms as they are non-Muslims. In the past, the highly developed and complex religious practices of the Dayak involved numerous local spirits and omen animals. Since the mid-20th century, however, Dayak peoples have steadily adopted Christian faiths and by the early 21st century the vast majority of the population was Christian (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

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Diola

TEK code: 404

The common identifier of the Diola (or Jola) is their language, called Jola or Diola. The language has several dialects and it “belongs to the Bak group of the Atlantic branch of the Niger-Congo language family” (Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009).

There are Diolas of Muslim, as well as of Christian faith (Minority Rights Group International 2017; Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009). Even though “Islam, Christianity and Western education” eroded the traditional beliefs and culture of the Diola, they have preserved some elements of their traditional beliefs and mix those with Islam and Christianity (Minority Rights Group International 2017). Their traditional belief system includes “a supreme being called Emit, or Ata Emit, the one who resides in the sky”. The Diola also have sacred shrines, charms, forests and lands (Asante and Mazama 2009, p. 354), (Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009).

The Diola communities “are highly fragmented, decentralised and highly autonomous”, don’t have a caste system and have a relatively classless social structure (Gambia Information Site 2018; Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009).

From a historical perspective, the Diola are known for their resistance to colonial powers and their isolation from other peoples. They resisted enslavement, were bypassed by the Portuguese, and the British in The Gambia, as well as the French in Senegal “had great difficulty in subjugating them”. However, over time they had to accept the colonial system, started paying taxes to the Europeans and many Diola were enslaved and “prized for their rice-growing skills” (Minority Rights Group International 2017; Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009). A more recent issue concerns the Casamance region in Senegal. This region is geographically separated from Senegal by the territory of The Gambia. Soon after Senegal’s independence, the Diola people inhabiting Casamance demanded independence. In 1982, this demand led to the formation of the Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance (MFDC), which mostly consisted of Diola Casamance separatists. Ten years later its armed faction called Attika emerged. This violent conflict between separatists and Senegalese security forces has caused civilian deaths and “refugee flows usually into Guinea-Bissau and The Gambia”. While it is a conflict of generally low intensity, it is “West Africa’s longest-running civil conflict” (Minority Rights Group International 2017; Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009). Recently the situation has become more peaceful and Senegal’s president Sall called for “lasting peace” (Journal du Cameroun 2018; Mi-

minority Rights Group International 2017).

From a cultural perspective, the Diola share numerous stories and legends about their heroes, battles and their origins. They also have a famous musical instrument called akonting (or folk lute) and music and dance in general are important cultural elements. The Diola are also known for their elaborate masks (Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009).

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Druze

TEK code: 307

The Druze are politically relevant in Syria and Lebanon. They live mostly in Lebanon, with smaller communities in Syria, Israel, and Jordan (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017). Druze are ethnically Arab and Arabic speaking (Minority Rights Group International 2018a). The transnational ethnic group's identifier is their distinct religious practice. An offshoot of Shi'ism, their monotheistic religion incorporates many beliefs from Islam, Judaism and Christianity, and is also influenced by Greek philosophy and Hinduism (Minority Rights Group International 2018a). The Druze religion is secretive and remains closed to outsiders, as they permit no conversion, either away from or to their religion (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017). Despite some pushes for a nation-state of their own earlier on, they became to play a fuller part in Lebanese and Syrian political life in the second half of the 20th century than their community size might have suggested (Minority Rights Group International 2018a), (Minority Rights Group International 2018b). About 15,000 Druze have lived under Israeli military occupation on the Golan since 1967. The status of their nationality so far remains unresolved, but most of them refuse to accept Israeli citizenship (Minority Rights Group International 2018b).

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Dutch speakers

TEK code: 238

The Dutch speakers are politically relevant in the Netherlands and Belgium. Obviously, this transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language. Dutch is the national language of the Netherlands and one of the three official languages of Belgium (with French and German), where it is called Flemish. Native Dutch speakers further live in a relatively small part of France along the North Sea immediately to the west of Belgium (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Other factors such as shared European ancestry or religion are irrelevant to this group.

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English speakers

TEK code: 122

The identifier of this transnational ethnic group is their common language. While English Canadian has “subtly distinctive features of pronunciation and vocabulary”, their language is still mutually intelligible and should be considered as their common identifier (James Harbeck 2015). An English-speaking Canadian is defined as “a Canadian whose first language is English or who is of English ancestry” and it is mostly used as a contrast to French speaking Canadians (Avis 1983, p. 39) (MSN Encarta 2009). Similarly, the definition for an Anglo- American is “a white English-speaking person of British or northern European origin, in particular (in the US) as distinct from a Hispanic American or (in Canada) as distinct from a French-speaker” (Oxford University Press 2017). This would mean that being white and of English ancestry would be a further common identifier. However, not all white English-speakers in those countries are from English ancestry, nor are all English-speakers white. Even in the US Census being white means “having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa” (Karen R. Humes, Nicholas A. Jones and Roberto R. Ramirez 2011). As Tehranian’s article shows, the meaning of who is included in the “white category” changes over time (Tehranian 2000, p. 847). Hence, being of white race could have been a common identifier in the past, but it isn’t necessarily the case anymore. The same considerations apply in the fields of religion and culture. White Americans have German, Irish, English, Italian and many more different ancestries, hence being of English ancestry isn’t a common identifier (anymore). In fact, not English, but “German-Americans are America’s largest single ethnic group (if you divide Hispanics into Mexican-Americans, Cuban-Americans, etc)” (The Economist 2015). Similarly, while the British ancestry is related to Protestantism, there are white catholic Americans, as well as non-religious or non-Christian Canadian English-speakers (Pew Research Center 2015; The Daily 2013).

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Ewe

TEK code: 405

The common identifiers of the Ewe are their language and common traditions. They speak Ewe, “a language of the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo family” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2013). The Ewe are a transnational ethnic group “strongly united by their language” (Frederick Clayton 2017). Nevertheless, there are various Ewe dialects (GlobalSecurity.org 2017; Minority Rights Group International 2014).

While today many Ewe are of Christian faith, they do have their own original belief system. Their original religion is based on a creator god, called Mawu and many other lesser gods. The Ewe also believe in ancestral spirits and their supernatural powers (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2013; Minority Rights Group International 2008), (Asante and Mazama 2009, p. 250). Many Ewe also still practice Voodoo worship (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996), (Shoup 2011, p. 90). Furthermore, the Ewe have numerous rites and rituals, like the Blekete ritual or puberty rites, but also the problematic *trokosi* tradition, where mostly young girls become the property of a shrine priest, in order to pay for alleged crimes of the girl’s family (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2002).

Concerning their historical origins, there are various sources. Most of the sources trace their origins to the Oyo in Nigeria, part of the Yoruba kingdom (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2013; Minority Rights Group International 2008) (for other sources see (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2002)). Between 1885 and 1914, the Ewes were divided between the British and the German colonial powers. The Ewe experienced preferential treatment from the Germans, since they saw them as future administrators (Minority Rights Group International 2008). Afterwards, the French ruled the territory of modern-day Togo, while the rest remained British. Hence, the Ewe are a people separated by colonial states. In 1954 the Togoland Congress tried to unify the Ewe people, but they remained separated until today (Shoup 2011, p. 90). In 1956 a majority in the British mandate territory voted in favour of joining Ghana (Minority Rights Group International 2014). This plebiscite however, “partitioned Eweland between the Gold Coast [today Ghana] and Togo” (GlobalSecurity.org 2017). While there have been small Ewe separatist movements and efforts towards self-determination, this “issue has died out since the late 1970s” (Minority Rights Group International 2014; World Culture Encyclopedia 2018). The Ewe have resented their division by the colonial powers and the other ethnic groups in Togo resented their preferential treatment during the colonial period.

The Ewe were never centrally organised and didn’t concentrate power within a large state, but formed a collection of independent small chiefdoms (The

Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2013; The Guardian 2016; Minority Rights Group International 2014). Descent is patrilineal and until today chiefs are elected in Ewe communities. The chiefs are expected to follow behavioural guidelines and are “the communicator between the everyday world and the world of the ancestors” (The Guardian 2016; Minority Rights Group International 2014). Furthermore the Ewe also have their own flag and they are known for their drumming and the kente cloth with its “geometrical patterns and symbolic designs that have been handed down through the ages” (Frederick Clayton 2017; The Guardian 2016), (Shoup 2011, p. 90). The annual Hogbetstoto Za festival commemorates their escape from the Notsie region in the sixteenth century (Asante and Mazama 2009, p. 250).

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Fang

TEK code: 1010

The Fang are politically relevant in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. They further live in Cameroon and the Republic of the Congo (Levinson 1998, p. 129), (Joshua Project 2019), where they, however, do not seek political representation at the national level.

The Fang transnational ethnic kin group's identifier is the common language, called Fang as well (Joshua Project 2019). They are mainly slash-and-burn farmers and have a highly structured form of social organization based on clans and inter-clan marriage (Levinson 1998, p. 129). Before World War II, the entire population was reportedly Christian. Since then, however, "there has been a rapid growth of syncretistic sects combining animistic and Christian beliefs with a cargo-cult element" (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Especially in Equatorial Guinea and to a lesser extent in Gabon, the Fang are perceived as a "threat" by other groups because of their relatively large group size (Levinson 1998, pp. 130, 134). Further, the Fang's failed attempt to create a state from territory of all the four countries named above in the mid-20th-century continues to be a concern for other ethnic groups in the area (Levinson 1998, p. 130). However, no activity of any Fang separatism is reported today.

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Finns

TEK code: 211

Finns are politically relevant ethnic groups in Finland and Russia. Repeatedly shifted national boundaries (Levinson 1998, p. 72) have led to a situation in which “political borders and the cultural borders of the Finnish nation are not a perfect match” (Armstrong 2011, p. 131). In particular Karelia in Russia is a region that bears a symbolical significance and is considered as cultural region of the Finns according to Armstrong (Armstrong 2011, p. 133). In fact, ethnic Finns are closely related to the Karelians and distantly related to the Saami (in the northern regions of Finland) (Levinson 1998, p. 27).

The identifiers of the ethnic Finns is the Finnish language they speak and cultural traditions that can date back until the 1st century A.D., which marks the arrival of the ancestors of today’s Finns (Levinson 1998, p. 27). Most ethnic Finns are Christians and adhere to the Lutheran church (Levinson 1998, p. 26). Mostly among the related ethnic groups in Russia along the eastern boundary, many adhere to the Eastern Orthodox Church however (Armstrong 2011, pp. 131–32).

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Fon

TEK code: 409

The common identifier of the Fon (called Dahomey in Benin until 1975) is their language. This language, called Fon, belongs to the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo family and is closely related to the Ewe language (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017).

Today many Fon are of Christian faith, but many elements of their traditional belief system exist until today. They still practice Vodun worship and Vodun orders are “the foundation of Fon religion” (World Culture Encyclopedia 2018a). During religious Vodun ceremonies the initiate falls into trance while drums are being played (Jamie Ahlers 2018). Furthermore, ancestors are being worshiped in the Fon religion (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017).

From a cultural perspective, the Fon are skilled ironworkers, weavers and pottery-makers (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017). Drums are an important part of their religious ceremonies. Additionally the Fon are known for “their appliqué hangings with legendary motifs from the Kingdom of Dahomey and Vodun culture” and their brass casting method (World Culture Encyclopedia 2018b). Finally, the Fon of Benin are the descendants of the Kingdom of Dahomey (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2015; The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017).

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French speakers

TEK code: 237

The French speakers are politically relevant as particular ethnic groups in France, Italy (Aostans), Switzerland, Belgium (Walloon), and Canada. The common French language is this transnational ethnic group's identifier. Outside of France, they live in adjacent areas in the European countries mentioned above as well as in Luxembourg. The French colonizers introduced French to other parts of the world such as Canada. Today, French often exists alongside other languages in multilingual contexts. It is spoken all over the world, ranked the sixth most widely spoken language (French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs 2018). Other factors such as shared European ancestry or religion are irrelevant to this group.

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Fulani

TEK code: 410

The Fulbe are known by many different names: they are known as “Fula” in Manding and Portuguese, “Peul” in French and “Fulani” or “Hilani” in the Hausa language (Duke Oreva 2017).

With the exception of the Hausa-Fulani of Nigeria, the Fulbe share a common language, known as Fula, Fulfulde, Pulaar or Peul. It is a part of the Atlantic branch of the Niger-Congo language family and has many dialects (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014; Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). However, the Hausa-Fulani in Nigeria speak the Hausa language (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014; Harvard Divinity School 2018).

Another important identifier of the Fulbe is their religion. Most Fulbe are Muslims, but the urban Fulani tend to be “most ardently Muslim”, whereas the “pastoral Fulani are frequently lax and sometimes even nonpracticing” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014). Their Islamic faith has been identified as a “major ethnic boundary marker” compared to other surrounding peoples (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). The same applies to the Hausa-Fulani, where Islam is “the primary centrifugal force that brings together the Hausa-Fulani identity” (Harvard Divinity School 2018). Originally all Fulbe were a pastoral and nomadic people. Today there are sedentary urban and pastoral Fulbe and the latter are seen as “the most truly representative of Fulani culture” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014). Today the Fulbe are the largest nomadic group in the world (AfricaGuide.com 2018; Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). In accordance with the pastoral tradition, cattle is very important in Fulbe society (AfricaGuide.com 2018). The Fulbe society accepts polygyny and descent is patrilineal (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014; Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). Furthermore, the Fulbe practice endogamy, which means that they marry only within their community (Duke Oreva 2017).

Historically, the Fulbe are either of North African or Arabic origin or they descend from nomads from both North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa. This explains their relatively lighter skin (AfricaGuide.com 2018; Omotolani Odumade 2017). As a nomadic people, the Fulbe “tended to move in an eastern direction and spread over much of West Africa”. Later, they also waged jihad wars in order to spread their faith (Duke Oreva 2017). A prominent example are the Hausa-Fulani. Formerly two separate groups, the Fulani conquered the Hausa at the beginning of the 19th century, by establishing the Sokoto Caliphate. (Harvard Divinity School 2018; Omotolani Odumade 2017). Today the Hausa-Fulani are seen as one ethnic group. They don’t speak Fula as the other Fulbe, but they share the same religion.

The Fulbe are known for their oral literature and many Fulbe women have blackish lips, due to their “use of Henna or tattooing done on the mouth” (AfricaGuide.com 2018; Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). The Fulbe share a common language (with the exception of the Hausa-Fulani), their Islamic faith, their pastoral and nomadic heritage and their adherence to a “moral and ethnical code known as Pulaaku” (Appiah and Jr. 2010, p. 496).

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Garifuna

TEK code: 1004

The Garifuna are politically relevant in Honduras and Belize. They live along the Caribbean coast from Nicaragua to Belize, mainly in small communities of their own (Minority Rights Group International 2019).

The shared ancestry is the Garifuna transnational ethnic kin group's identifier. They are descended from Carib Indians and African slaves on the Caribbean islands. In 1797, the British deported the Garifuna to mainland Central America, because they feared a revolt on the island of St. Vincent (Levinson 1998, p. 359), (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

As the majority of the population of Central America, most Garifuna were converted to Christianity (Levinson 1998, pp. 319, 359). They speak their own Caribbean language with Spanish, English, and French borrowings while some speak proper English or Spanish (Ethnologue. Languages of the World 2019). They play a small role in regional or national affairs and many are employed in low-paying, unskilled jobs (Levinson 1998, p. 359). Rural Garifuna communities in Central America live mainly on subsistence agriculture, fishing and foreign remittances from those who emigrated to the United States in search of better-paying employment (Minority Rights Group International 2019).

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Georgians

TEK code: 212

Georgians, often also referred to as Kartvelians (George 2011, p. 165), are politically relevant ethnic groups in Georgia and Russia.

Following George (George 2011, p. 165), there is not one key ethnic identifier as "the Georgian cultural identity has several dimensions, both linguistic and regional". The ethnic Georgians speak Georgian which is also called Kartvelian. The Kartvelian language is part of the South Caucasus language family (George 2011, p. 165).

Ethnic Georgians can further be divided into three ethnic subgroups. Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 34) identifies Ajars, Khevsur, and Mingrelians. In the same vein, George (George 2011, p. 165) distinguishes between Svans, Laz and Mingrelians. Even though all the subgroups speak different Kartvelian languages, they identify themselves as Georgians (George 2011, p. 165). While Svans and Mingrelians live in Georgia, many Laz reside in northeastern parts of the neighbouring Turkey (George 2011, p. 165).

Georgians are predominantly Christian and a majority of them adheres to the Georgian Orthodox Church (Levinson 1998, p. 34). However, there are also smaller groups of Georgians identifying themselves as Sunni Muslims or Catholics (George 2011, p. 165). After the end of the Soviet era, religious adherence to the Orthodox Christian Church has experienced a revival among Georgians (George 2011, pp. 167–68).

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German-speakers

TEK code: 214

German-speakers are politically relevant ethnic groups in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Namibia, Poland, Romania, Russia, and Switzerland.

The main ethnic identifier of German-speakers is the German language (Levinson 1998, pp. 14, 37, 48–9, 154) or as Moser (Moser 2011, p. 172) puts it, “the German language is the primary though not exclusive criterion of German identity”.

German-speakers are predominantly adhering to different streams of Christianity. Among the Christians, most German speakers adhere to the Catholic Church or the Protestant Church. In addition, smaller groups of Jewish and Muslim beliefs can be found. Finally, as a result of an increasing secularization throughout the last decades, a significant amount of German speakers without a religious association coexists (Moser 2011, p. 172).

Not all German speaking populations identify themselves as ethnic Germans. Namely in Austria, South Tyrol in Italy, and in Switzerland other identities more referred to (Moser 2011, pp. 171–72). According to Thorpe (Thorpe 2011, p. 23), Austrians are rather a national group than an ethnic group. In Switzerland, Leimgruber (Leimgruber 2011, p. 169) gets to the similar conclusion that German speakers “do not regard themselves as an ethnic group”. Following the author (Leimgruber 2011, p. 169), German speakers in Switzerland emphasize the role of their specific dialect and the region associated with it. In addition, it should be noted that while Swiss Germans are aware of their close cultural ties with neighbouring German speakers, “their self-awareness is to a high degree defined by marking themselves off as a nation”. This, in turn, is rooted in a century-long history of independence.

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Germanic Whites

TEK code: 281

The Germanic Whites are currently politically relevant in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. This transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common ancestry. They are descendants of the Dutch settlers in Southern Africa, who started to colonize the area around the Cape of Good Hope in the 17th and 18th centuries and moved from there further inside the continent (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). They brought the Dutch language to this part of the world, subsequently called Afrikaans due to its specifications. The language is spoken by 6,8 mio. people in Southern Africa today, both whites and blacks (Ethnologue. Languages of the world 2018). The Germanic Whites are minorities with limited political influence in the post-colonial states they inhabit today (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

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Gio

TEK code: 423

The Gio, also called Dan or Yakuba, inhabit the mountainous west-central Cote d'Ivoire and adjacent areas of Liberia (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). They are politically relevant in both countries. The Gio transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language, which belongs to the Southern branch of the Mande linguistic family (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Their self-awareness as a distinct culture emerged only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In terms of religion, they resisted Islam's expansion in the region and mainly follow indigenous religious traditions. However, religion cross-cuts political units in both countries (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

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Greeks

TEK code: 215

Greeks are politically relevant ethnic groups in Albania, Greece, Cyprus, and the Lebanon.

According to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 40), Greek cultural identity is mainly defined by the Greek language, Greek Orthodoxy as well as shared customs and a history of migration “both within and outside Greece”.

In Cyprus, the Greeks are called Greek Cypriots. Apart from the shared adherence to the Greek Orthodox Church, irredentist have historically promoted the concept of “enosis”, which stands for the political unification with Greece. However, in recent years this political influence from Greece has diminished, as Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 20) points out.

There are two different Greek groups in the Lebanon: Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholics. While both groups stress their Arabic identity, even rites of Greek Catholics “remain similar to those of the Greek Orthodox community” which underlines the cultural links between the groups (Levinson 1998, p. 250).

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Gur

TEK code: 420

The Gur transnational ethnic kin group is politically relevant in Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. The common identifier of this group is their language. The Gur or Voltaic languages comprise a variety of some 85 languages. They are spoken in the savannah lands that stretch from south-eastern Mali across northern Côte d'Ivoire, through much of Burkina Faso, to all of northern Ghana, Togo, and Benin (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). There are no reports of any political activities which unite the various tribal and linguistic subgroups.

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Hausa

TEK code: 418

The Hausa are politically relevant in Niger and Nigeria, where they have traditionally inhabited a contiguous transborder territory. In Nigeria, they have become politically integrated with the smaller Fulani ethnicity, whose members conquered the former kingdom of “Hausaland” in the early 19th century (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018b). The Hausa transnational ethnic group’s identifier is the common language, which was partly adopted by the Fulani as well. The large majority of Hausa is Muslim, however, their identity is primarily linguistically defined (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018a). Their society used to be politically organized on a feudal basis, which still holds true today at the local level (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018a).

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Herero

TEK code: 435

The Herero are a group of closely related Bantu-speaking peoples of south-western Africa. This transnational ethnic kin group comprises the Herero proper, also known as the Mbanderu, who inhabit parts of central Namibia and Botswana (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). They are politically relevant in both countries. Their common identifier is their language, called Herero as well, which is further spoken by a small minority in Angola (Joshua Project 2018). Their traditional religion is a form of ancestor worship, but many Herero have adopted Christianity (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). An issue primarily concerning the Herero of Namibia, which is the bulk of them, is the genocide of the Herero at the hands of the German colonial rulers in what was then called German Southwest Africa. The Herero leadership in Namibia issued international legal claims for financial reparations by the German government (Gewald 2003). Meanwhile, Germany remained determined to avert legal liability for reparations as by 2017 (Economist 2017).

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Hindus

TEK code: 355

The Hindus are politically relevant in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Fiji, and Uganda. The Hindu transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common religion. Hinduism is a "major world religion originating on the Indian subcontinent and comprising several and varied systems of philosophy, belief, and ritual" (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Despite its global presence, Hinduism only represents a relevant marker according to EPR coding rules in the countries listed above. The Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) of historically disadvantaged - and mostly politically discriminated - people are excluded from this group.

The Hindus in this group are diverse in terms of language (Hindi, Bengali, Nepali, and others) and part of specific national settings. Despite the heterogeneity of this group, Hindus themselves affirm their religious identity, "continuing and even accelerating a process of self-definition that has been going on for millennia" (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

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Hmong

TEK code: 502

The Hmong are politically relevant in Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, and China, where they are called Miao. Their common identifier is the Hmong language, classified by Ethnologue (Ethnologue 2019) as a “macrolanguage” with different subtypes, such as Hmong Daw.

The original home of the Hmong is thought to have been in the Huang He (Yellow River) basin of central China. They were slowly driven southward and marginalized by the expanding population of the Han Chinese since the late 18th century (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

Due to their dispersion in South East Asia, Hmong cultural life and religious beliefs are rich and diverse. They are particularly noted for embroidery and love songs (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Hmong subgroups are named after the dominating colours of their clothing such as the White Hmong, Striped Hmong, Red Hmong and Black Hmong (Minority Rights Group International 2018a). They adhere to traditional beliefs and Christianity (Ethnologue 2019).

The Hmong allied with the U.S. during the Vietnam War, which had two main consequences: First, there is a significant Hmong population in the U.S. today - people who resettled there as refugees after the war (Minority Rights Group International 2018a), (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Second, the Hmong are still persecuted and face repressionist treatment by the states of Vietnam and Laos due to their previous support of the U.S. army. In the mid-2000s, many fled to Thailand, where they, however, were forcibly repatriated by the Thai government after 2009 (Minority Rights Group International 2018b), (Elaine Pearson 2009).

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Hungarians

TEK code: 216

Hungarians, also known as Magyars, are politically relevant ethnic groups in Croatia, Hungary, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, and Ukraine. In addition, they were politically relevant ethnic groups in the former Czechoslovakia and in Serbia and Montenegro.

The main ethnic identifiers of the Hungarians are the language, a centuries-old shared culture and history. The language Hungarians speak is a Finno-Ugric language (Kürti 2011, p. 185). There is a scholarly debate about the language's origin. Some scholars claim it is a Finno-Ugric language that has its origins in the Uralic language family, others stress the Asiatic background and emphasize its proximity to the Mongols, Uyghurs and Kazakhs (Kürti 2011, pp. 185–86).

Hungarians further distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups in Eastern Europe through a long shared history and culture, such as folk traditions, peasant culture and dances (Kürti 2011, pp. 188–89).

A majority of the Hungarians adhere to Roman Catholicism, and around a third to the Protestant Church (Kürti 2011, p. 185). However, there are also smaller numbers of Greek Orthodox, Evangelicals, Baptist and Jewish Hungarians (Kürti 2011, p. 185). Even though some Hungarians in Romania have pushed for more regional autonomy (Minorities at Risk 2006), an active movement that demands unification or accession of the territory to Hungary is largely absent.

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Hutu

TEK code: 444

The Hutu are politically relevant in Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda. In Rwanda and Burundi, the Hutu comprise the vast majority but were traditionally subject to the warrior-pastoralist Tutsi (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). In both countries, ethnic tensions between the two groups have persisted throughout the second half of the 20th century and ever since, culminating in the genocidal campaign against Tutsi and moderate Hutu in Rwanda in 1994 (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). The presence of both groups in Uganda led to ethnic tensions there as well: while many Hutu left for Rwanda in the early 1980s, those who remained were wary of the alliance between Uganda and the post-genocide Rwandan government. On their part, they were mistrusted by Tutsi (Minority Rights Group International 2019).

The Hutu and Tutsi cultures gradually integrated over the centuries. The Tutsi adopted the mutually intelligible Bantu languages Rwanda and Rundi, which were originally spoken by the Hutu. Further, they share a kinship and clan system and the central importance of cattle for their lifestyles (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). However, the groups differ in physical appearance, as the the Hutu are short and stout and the Tutsi are rather tall and thin (Levinson 1998, p. 159). The Hutu's religious beliefs, which include forms of animism and Christianity, cross-cut political units (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

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Indian Muslims

TEK code: 365

This transnational ethnic group comprises the Muslim population of the Indian subcontinent. Today, politically relevant Muslim groups live in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Islam was first introduced on the subcontinent through Arab invasions in the Middle Ages and spread as a response to Muslim rule over the Hindu populations and the potential to gain social mobility (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

While the concentration of Muslims historically was in the north-west (present-day Pakistan) and the east (present-day Bangladesh), there were substantial numbers throughout the Indian subcontinent. Most of them are Sunni Muslims (Minority Rights Group International 2018). Today, they are in the majority in Pakistan and Bangladesh, while they present minorities in India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal (Central Intelligence Agency 2018). Thus, the division of India along communal lines in 1948 could not eradicate the question of religious minorities. Instead, it contributed to exacerbating the already existing tensions and divisions (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

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Indigenous peoples

TEK code: 112

Venezuela and Guyana have numerous indigenous peoples in common. The groups presented here are the Pemon, the Warao, the Akawaio, the Patamona, the Lokono (or Arawak) and the Kalina.

- The common identifier of the Pemons is the Pemon language. However Spanish is becoming more frequently used, especially among the young people. While they have an own belief system, Catholicism is also present among the Pemon. The result is a mix between their original belief system and Catholicism. Their original belief system includes the “Makunaimais”, “a series of creation stories of the Pemon land, crops, techniques, and social practices” and the belief in Kanaima the spirit of evil. Many Pemon still have a sacred and secret name, besides their known Spanish and Indian names (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017a)

- The common identifier of the Warao people is the Warao language (Ethnologue 2017b). They mostly live in the Orinoco River delta in Venezuela. Their lifestyle is closely related to water since they “built their homes on the edge of rivers and traveled around by canoes” and they live in “huts on stilts over water” (Hands Around the World unknown). Concerning their religion, Christianity has developed some influence over time, “but the vast majority of the indigenous population continues to adhere to traditional beliefs and values”. Their traditional beliefs include the importance of ancestors and their spirits, shamanism and spirits (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017b). They “have unique and complex social classes of chiefs, priests, shamans, magicians, and labourers associated with the temples” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016).

- The common identifier of the Akawaio is the Akawaio language. This language belongs to the Cariban sub-branch Kapon (as does the Patamona), which is closely related to the Pemon language (Moseley 2007, pp. 105, 159). The Akawaio, Patamona and Pemon are closely related. The Akawaio place great importance on kinship with their “concept of interlinked, three-generation cycles, each generation of grandchildren replicating the grandparental one”. Marriages often take place between cousins. While their traditional belief system has been influenced by Christianity, they place great importance on the sun, “masters and mistresses of species and resources” and offerings to them and shamanism (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996).

- The common identifier of the Patamona is the Patamona language (Ethnologue 2017a). This language belongs to the Cariban subbranch Kapon, which is closely related to the Pemon language (Moseley 2007, p. 159).

- The common identifier of the Lokono (or Arawak) people is the Arawak

language. However, since its mostly spoken by older adults, it could soon become extinct (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2006).
- The common identifier of the Kalina is the Carib language (Ethnologue 2015).

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Indigenous peoples

TEK code: 113

Venezuela and Brazil have numerous indigenous peoples in common. The groups presented here are the Yanomami, Bare, Baniwa and Yekuana. Furthermore, the Pemon, Kalina and Patamona are present in Brazil, Guyana and Venezuela (their description can be found in the description of indigenous groups of Venezuela and Guyana).

- The common identifier of the Yanomami is their language, which is called Yanomami or Xirana (Moseley 2007, pp. 186–187) (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). Since they are “the largest relatively isolated tribe in South America”, they also have preserved their traditional belief system. As with other indigenous groups, shamanism and the spirit world are of crucial importance. They believe that every “creature, rock, tree and mountain has a spirit” (Survival 2017). Another identifying feature of this group is that they “place a high premium on aggressive behaviour”, since the various Yanomami groups are constantly at war with each other and forming alliances with other friendly groups is an important component of their social life. This also implies that they live in semi-permanent villages, since they relocate when the village becomes susceptible to attack or when the soil wears out (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). Their houses, called yanos or shabonos, are circular and communal and are suited for up to 400 people. Finally, they do not recognize chiefs and “decisions are made by consensus” (Survival 2017).

- The common identifier of the Bare was their language. Today only just a few older group members still speak the Bare language and most of them are now speaking the local lingua franca “Nheengatu” (Moseley 2007, p. 115). Overall the Bare are now largely assimilated and detribalised (Olson 1991, p. 53).

- The common identifier of the Baniwa is their language (Moseley 2007, p. 114). Their belief system was “based on the great mythological and ritual cycles related to the first ancestors and symbolized by the sacred flutes and trumpets, on the central importance of shamanism (pajés and chanters, or chant-owners) and on a rich variety of dance rituals, called pudali, associated with the seasonal cycles and the maturation of forest fruits” (Robin Wright 2002). Initiation rituals were also important. However, the Baniwa are now mostly of Christian faith, due to evangelization by Protestant and Catholic missionaries. Many of their rituals, for example the pudali were banned (Robin Wright 2002). Finally, the Baniwa are known for their basketry manufacturing skills (Geraldo Andrello and Robin Wright 2002). The Baniwa also live in Colombia.

- The common identifiers of the Yekuana (or Makiritare) are their language

and their basket and bongo (a vase-like basket) manufacturing skills (Moseley 2007, p. 188) (Hands Around the World 2006). The making of baskets is a crucial element of their culture, since “each stage of their lifecycle is honored with an exchange of baskets that occurs between the sexes” (Hands Around the World 2006; Minority Rights Group International 2017). They still live relatively secluded, although there is an increased assimilation (Olson 1991, p. 415). Their belief system distinguishes between heaven, earth and underworld and heaven “is inhabited by Wanadi (the Supreme Being and son of the sun), his family, and a select group of ancestral spirits”. Shamanism is important too, since shamans can visit Wanadi. However, their belief system is increasingly influenced by Christianity, due to their interactions with missionaries (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996).

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Indigenous peoples

TEK code: 114

Guyana and Brazil have numerous indigenous peoples in common. The groups presented here are the Waiwai, Macushi and Wapishana. Furthermore, the Akawaio, the Kalina, the Patamona and the Arekuna (a subgroup of the Pemon) are present in Brazil, Guyana and Venezuela (their description can be found in the description of indigenous groups of Venezuela and Guyana/ Venezuela and Brazil).

- The common identifier of the Waiwai is their language. According to Moseley, the Waiwais from Brazil and Guyana interact frequently, especially for trade and religious worship (Moseley 2007, p. 178). They used to have an own belief system, but they have converted to Christianity since the 1950s (Evelyn Schuler Zea 2006). However, there remain some tribal elements related to shamanism. Finally, baskets are important Waiwai men (Hands Around the World unknown).

- The common identifier of the Macushi (or Makushi/Macuxi) is their language (Moseley 2007, pp. 146–147). The interaction with the Europeans changed their lifestyles and they lost their mobility and many traditions (Graham Watkins 2017). Their original belief system stated that the universe is “composed of three planes superimposed in space that meet on the horizon”, the intermediary plane being the earth (Paulo Santilli 2004a). They believed that Omakon and Makoi, two beings, inhabit the earth and that they are dangerous for humans. Only shamanism could help to save a human soul that has been captured by those beings (Paulo Santilli 2004a). Traditional Macushi villages are arranged according to kin groups (Paulo Santilli 2004b).

- The common identifier of the Wapishana (or Waipixana) is their language (Moseley 2007, pp. 178–179). However, the number of Wapishana speaking their language is proportionally higher in Guyana. Already in the 1970s, 60

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Indigenous peoples of the Amazon

TEK code: 116

Ecuador and Peru have numerous indigenous peoples in common. The groups presented here are the Shuar, the Achuar, the Secoya, the Zapara, the Huambisa and the Amazonian Kichwas.

- The common identifier of the Shuar is their common language (Moseley 2007, p. 166). They used to be known for their ritual of decapitating and then shrink the heads of their enemies, but this habit doesn't exist anymore (ARD 2010). They are a subgroup of the Jivaroan people (Amazon Explorer 2011).

- Another subgroup of the Jivaroan people is the Achuar group (Amazon Explorer 2011). Their common identifier is their language (Moseley 2007, p. 104). The belief system of the Achuar is a mixture between Christian elements brought to them by missionaries and their original beliefs (Barbara Dombrowski 2015). They have a deep connection with the nature that surrounds them, since they believe that „they have been living in these river basins since the beginning of time” (Amazon Watch 2017). Additionally they are animists, which means that they believe that every natural phenomenon possess its own spirit. This explains their respectful treatment of their natural environment (Barbara Dombrowski 2015). Another important component of their culture is “a spirituality oriented around dreams and visions” and shamanism (Pachamama Alliance 2017). Traditionally, the Achuar wear colourful feathered crowns (Barbara Dombrowski 2015).

- The common identifier of the Secoya is their language. The Peruvian and Ecuadorian Secoyas “were separated by a war between Ecuador and Peru divided the Secoya homelands“ (Moseley 2007, p. 165). They are known for their extensive knowledge in natural medicine, including “a powerful hallucinogen used in Secoya shamanism called Ayahuasca a vine used all over the Amazon by other indigenous cultures” (Pilot Productions unknown).

- One of the common identifiers of the Zapara (or Zaparo) is their language. However, it should be noted that the Zapara are the “smallest indigenous group in the Ecuadorian Amazon” (Moseley 2007, p. 190). This, combined with them growing closer to the Quechua culture, led to the problem that they are facing extinction. Hence, in 2001 the “UNESCO declared the oral heritage and cultural manifestations of the Zápara people of Amazonia a ‘Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity’ ” (Bilhaut 2003, p. 25). According to the Zapara “their ancestral lands, language and practice of shamanism” are the distinctive features of their identity (Bilhaut 2003, p. 26). As many other indigenous groups, they have a harmonious relation to their natural environment (Bilhaut 2003, p. 28).

- Another subgroup of the Jivaroan people is the Huambisa group (Amazon

Explorer 2011). Their common identifier is their language (Moseley 2007, p. 131). According to Weiler myths about their ancestors and their worldview, are an important part of the identity of the Huambisas (Weiler 2011, p. 165).

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Indigenous peoples of the Amazon

TEK code: 118

Brazil, Colombia and Peru have numerous indigenous peoples in common. The groups presented here are the Ticuna, Kokama and Witoto.

- One of the common identifiers of the Ticuna is their common language (Moseley 2007, p. 172). Their language is not related to the other languages in the region. The Ticuna were able to “conserve many important traditional cultural practices, including initiation rites, shamanism, mythology, arts and language” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2011). While some elements of their original belief system are still important, the “the majority of Ticuna are now Catholic” and messianic movements were important (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017b). Their original belief system “teaches that the world is controlled by spirits and forces that determine the course of events. They also believe in three worlds, where the Ta’e divinity lives in the world above and “who gives the Ticuna their souls”. Shamanism is still practised, but it used to be more important in earlier times (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017b) (Danver 2013, pp. 161–162). Another common identifier is the clan structure of the Ticuna. Their society is divided into two “moieties”, which in turn are composed of clans, which consist of sub-clans. A Ticuna person can only marry a member of the other moiety and the “clan belonging is transmitted from father to son” (Equipe de edição da Enciclopédia Povos Indígenas no Brasil 2008b). This common identifier is important since the clan membership “confers the individual with a social position, without which he or she would not be recognized as Ticuna” (Equipe de edição da Enciclopédia Povos Indígenas no Brasil 2008b). However, due to marriages between white men and Ticuna women, this custom is weakening (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). They are also known to be skilled artists, especially for ceremonial masks, baskets, large animal figures and they have a “collection of pigments and dyes (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2011; Equipe de edição da Enciclopédia Povos Indígenas no Brasil 2008a).

- The common identifier of the Kokama is their common language, however it is considered to be endangered (Moseley 2007, pp. 122–123, 141). However, there have been language revitalization efforts since the early 1980s (Rosa Vallejos 2017). The Kokama are now mostly Christians, but they still practice shamanism (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017a). The shaman uses ayahuasca in order to communicate with the supernatural world, which is inhabited by the god Ini Jará (Equipe de edição da Enciclopédia Povos Indígenas no Brasil 2006a). They still do ajuri, which is community work followed by a communal meal, a tradition also practiced by the Ticuna (Equipe de edição da Enciclopédia Povos Indígenas no Brasil 2006b). The Kokama

“are famous for their pottery, which has linear and rectilinear designs of red, white, and black” (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017a).

- The common identifier of the Witoto is their common language (Moseley 2007, pp. 132, 182). They still have ceremonies and ritual dancing in order to “regulate the relationships of humans with their environment and with one another”. Furthermore, shamanism still exists. Their society is divided into “dominant” and “subordinates/commoners” patrilineages. Each group has assigned tasks and “is associated with a certain color, animal, or plant”. The members of the “commoners” are assigned “arduous and monotonous tasks” and live in smaller houses (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017c).

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Irish Catholics

TEK code: 260

The Irish Catholics are politically relevant in Ireland, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia. The transnational ethnic group's identifier is their common ancestral homeland in Great Britain as well as their adherence to Catholic faith. Many Irish emigrated to the New World, especially as a consequence of the Great Irish Famine from 1845 to 1852. They established communities in the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Protestant Irish emigrated to these countries likewise, which cross-cuts Irish identity in the diaspora (Delaney and MacRaild 2007) (Historica Canada. The Canadian Encyclopedia 2018).

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Italian-speakers

TEK code: 217

Italians are politically relevant ethnic groups in Italy, Switzerland, Croatia and Slovenia.

The main ethnic identifier is the Italian language.

In addition, Italians are predominantly Roman-Catholic. It should be noted that among the seemingly homogeneous group of Italians in Italy, there exists a "considerable regional diversity in cultural traditions and language" (Levinson 1998, p. 46). These regional differences can be traced back to the period before the country was unified in a nation state.

In Switzerland it can be differentiated between Italian Swiss and Italians. The former live predominantly in two Swiss cantons and adhere to Roman Catholicism with "an overlay of local beliefs and practices" (Levinson 1998, p. 89). The latter traditionally migrated to Switzerland as guest workers and are spread across all parts of Switzerland.

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Jews

TEK code: 236

The Jews are a transnational ethnic group based on their common religion. For practicing believers, Judaism is a total way of life, comprising theology, law, and innumerable cultural traditions (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). In past centuries, Jews lived scattered throughout the world. The large diaspora enabled a variety of theological orientations and cultural differences to prosper. Jews share the monotheistic belief in God and more recently a strong attachment to the state of Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people (Morgenstern 2008, pp. 582–583). Their common history is marked by prosecution at different stages, which culminated in the Holocaust in the twentieth century (**Morgenstern08**). For the EPR data set, which starts after the Second World War, politically relevant groups of Jews were identified in Poland, Russia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Iran, and the Jewish state of Israel. Since its foundation in 1948, a steady flow of Jews has emigrated to Israel, so their numbers gradually became irrelevant in Yemen, Libya, Poland, and Egypt.

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Kachin

TEK code: 603

The Kachin comprise several interrelated tribal peoples occupying parts of north-eastern Myanmar and contiguous areas of India (Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland) and China (Yunnan) (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). While by far the greatest number of Kachin live in Myanmar, they are politically relevant in all three countries they inhabit.

The Kachin subgroups speak a variety of languages of the Tibeto-Burman language family and are thereby distinguished as Jingpo, Atsi, Maru, Lashi, Nung, and Lisu (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). The majority of Kachin are Jingpo speakers, which is one of the officially recognized minority languages of China and thus, the Jingpo are listed as a separate group in EPR. The other Kachin subgroup listed in China are the Lisu. They are sometimes referred to as a separate ethnic group from the Kachin in the Chinese context (see e.g. Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 213)) but generally count as a subgroup of this linguistic and geographical cluster of peoples (see e.g. Human Rights Watch report on internally displaced Kachin people (Human Rights Watch 2012)).

The Kachin predominantly live in mountainous areas at a low population density, traditionally subsisting on the shifting cultivation of hill rice, supplemented by the proceeds of banditry and feud warfare (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Most Kachin are either Protestant or Catholic, while a minority are Buddhist (Levinson 1998, p. 258), (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). In Myanmar, their Christian faith was a driving factor for ensuing ethnic tensions after Buddhism was declared the official religion in 1961, as this was perceived as an affront by the Kachin (Minority Rights Group International 2019).

The simmering tensions erupted in 2011, when a 17-year old ceasefire between the Burmese national government and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) active in Myanmar's Kachin State broke down (Minority Rights Group International 2019), (Ho 2017). As a consequence, many Kachin fled to other areas inside Myanmar, while others sought refuge across the border in Yunnan Province in southwestern China (Human Rights Watch 2012). Ho (Ho 2017, p. 94) argues that this led to "webs of connections" among the Kachin, as local organisations adopted a geographical division of labour to cater to the needs of refugees and displaced people on both sides of the Myanmar-China border.

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Kalanga

TEK code: 432

The Kalanga are politically relevant in Zimbabwe and Botswana. The transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language, called Kalanga as well and comprising two main dialects. While the dialect termed Kalanga prevails in Zimbabwe, most speakers of the Lilima dialect live in Botswana (Ethnologue 2018).

According to Joshua Project (Joshua Project 2018), people who speak the Kalanga language settle in Tanzania as well, where they, however, do not seek political representation at the state-level. Werbner (Werbner 2002, p. 734) locates the Kalanga historically in the wider region of Southern Africa and emphasizes the transnational character of their ethnicity. In post-colonial African politics, however, they have only played an important part in the country of Botswana, where they perceive of their identity first and foremost in national terms (Werbner 2002, p. 735).

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Kashmiri Muslims

TEK code: 364

The Kashmiri Muslims are politically relevant in India and Pakistan. They inhabit the politically contested Kashmir region situated in the North of both countries. The Kashmiri Muslims' identifier is that they are native to this area and practice Islam, which applies to the majority of Kashmiri people (Minority Rights Group International 2018). Apart from that, the people in this region have various ethnic backgrounds and speak a number of different languages: In the Jammu area in the Indian part of Kashmir they speak Hindi, Punjabi, and Dogri. The inhabitants of the Vale of Kashmir and the Pakistani areas speak Urdu and Kashmiri (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

The Kashmiri Muslims' transnational ethnic group comprises the Muslim populations living in adjacent regions as well, stressing the religious link between the groups living in the border areas between Pakistan and India. Namely, these are the Mohajir and Punjabi groups in Pakistan, as well as the "Other Muslims" group in India. Note that in this context, the term "Kashmiri Muslims" is applied as a geographical reference only, as opposed to the ethnic terminology described in the EPR India comment with reference to Varshney (Varshney 1991). He distinguishes between "Kashmiri" and "Jammu Muslims" which are both part of this transnational ethnic kin group.

In recent decades, especially since the 1980ies, a number of separatist movements have been active in the area, causing violent conflict first and foremost between the local Muslim majority population and the Indian state. Those movements "variously sought a merger of Kashmir with Pakistan, independence for the region from both India and Pakistan, or the granting of Indian union territory status to Buddhist Ladakh" (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

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Kazakh

TEK code: 218

Kazakh, often referred to as Qazak or Kazak, are politically relevant ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, China, Mongolia, Russia, and Turkmenistan. Among Central Asian peoples, the Kazakh are the most numerous ones (Minahan 2014, p. 133). A prominent feature of the Kazakh identity is the nomadic pastoralism, which played an important role in their history that dates back to the 15th Century (Levinson 1998, p. 241). Another important identifier is the Kazakh language. Kazakh is a Turkic language that belongs to the Kipchak language group (Minahan 2014, p. 133). The language, which is spoken in large parts of the Caspian Sea region, central Siberia and north western China, was originally written in Arabic script. In China and Mongolia, a modified Arabic script is still used. In regions under Soviet rule, the language was written in Cyrillic alphabet. Today, there is a trend to adopt the Latin alphabet (Minahan 2014, p. 133).

Lastly, since the 15th century, Kazakh are predominantly Muslim (Levinson 1998, p. 241). Among the Kazakh Muslim, a majority are adhering to a Sunni branch of the Islam (Minahan 2014, p. 135). Two key characteristics exist. First, the spread of Islam in the region was a relatively slow process due to the geography of vast steppe lands. Therefore, according to (Minahan 2014, p. 135) “Islam has long existed alongside the early belief system”. Second, under the Soviet rule “religious worship was repressed” (Levinson 1998, p. 241). This era had threatened and destroyed much of the existing religious and traditional practices. However, according to (Levinson 1998, p. 241), in the post-Soviet era a “reemergence of Islam and of traditional crafts, music, and art as an expression of ethnic identity” can be observed.

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Khmer

TEK code: 516

The Khmer constitute the largest and dominant ethnic group in Cambodia. Further, they are politically relevant as a minority in Vietnam. The ancestors of the modern Khmer people ruled the entire region, including Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and southern Vietnam, from the 9th to the 15th century (Levinson 1998, p. 207).

The Khmer transnational ethnic kin group's identifiers are the common ancestry and the Khmer language which belongs to the Austroasiatic Mon-Khmer language family (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). By the 15th century, they had adopted Theravada Buddhism, although mixed with Hindu and indigenous beliefs (Levinson 1998, p. 208). The Khmer are traditionally an agricultural people, living in villages and subsisting on rice and fish (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

The Cambodian "Khmer Loeu" group – meaning Upland or Hill Khmer – are not part of this TEK group, as most of them are culturally and linguistically unrelated to the Khmer (Levinson 1998, p. 208).

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Koreans

TEK code: 520

The Koreans are politically relevant in North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, and the former Soviet Union (in EPR, see Russia). The Korean transnational ethnic kin group's identifier is the common language. Korean is the official language in both North and South Korea. Between the two countries, there are only minor language differences and both endorse unified standards by the Korean Language Society (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a). The Korean peninsula's ethnic makeup is very homogeneous, which is partly explained by its location far away from the migration routes of early populations (Minority Rights Group International 2019a). Historically, the values and lifestyles of Koreans were based fundamentally on Confucian thought (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b). Today, they adhere to various faiths including Buddhism and Christianity (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b) but religion has no political salience for this group.

The Korean diaspora is dispersed around the globe with a significant number residing in the United States of America (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a), where they, however, do not seek political representation at the national level. Koreans living outside the Korean peninsula have adopted the languages of their residential countries at different levels. In present-day Kazakhstan, they are mostly Russian-speaking (Minority Rights Group International 2019b), while most older Koreans in Japan speak Korean and younger, second or third generation Koreans increasingly speak only Japanese (Minority Rights Group International 2019c).

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Kru

TEK code: 417

Kru is an umbrella term for several peoples inhabiting southern Liberia and southwestern Cote d'Ivoire (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). While they make up one politically relevant group in Cote d'Ivoire, only the Krahn (Guere) subgroup of the Kru seeks political representation at the state level in Liberia. The Kru transnational ethnic group's identifier is their common language. It consists of several dialects which constitute a branch of the Niger-Congo language family (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). The Kru's political organization was traditionally uncentralized, each subgroup inhabiting a number of autonomous towns without close transborder ties. Within each of these towns, social organization is based on clans (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Therefore, they do not identify strongly with their transnational kins.

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Kurds

TEK code: 302

The Kurds are politically relevant in Turkey, Syria, Irak, Iran and Armenia. Most of the Kurds live in contiguous areas of Iran, Iraq, and Turkey – a rather loosely defined geographic region generally referred to as Kurdistan (“Land of the Kurds”) without it being a political entity. A sizable non-contiguous Kurdish population also exists in the Khorasan region, situated in Iran’s northeast (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). The Kurd transnational ethnic group’s identifier is the common language. Apart from that, most Kurds adhere to the Sunni Muslim faith and they share a common ancestry from nomads living throughout the Mesopotamian plains and the highlands of Turkey and Iran (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Despite their long-standing occupation of a particular region of the world, the Kurds never achieved nation-state status, which further united the transnational group throughout the 20th century in their struggle for more autonomy within their respective national borders (Minority Rights Group International 2014) or in a united Kurdish state (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

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Kyrgyz

TEK code: 219

Kyrgyz are politically relevant ethnic groups in China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.

Belonging to the Turkic people of Central Asia, Kyrgyz speak the Kyrgyz language. According to Minahan (Minahan 2014, pp. 152–4), it is a South Kipchak Turkic language that can be traced to the Kazakh-Nogai branch of the Turkic languages. While Kyrgyz is widely spoken and promoted by the Kyrgyz government, Russian is considered as the language of business and commerce which is a result of Soviet rule over most of the region (Minahan 2014, p. 154).

The rich culture reflects the long history of the Kyrgyz in the region. In fact, following Minahan (Minahan 2014, p. 153), the Kyrgyz “first appeared in written Chinese record around 100 BCE”. The culture is influenced by the nomadic lifestyle that marked most of the ethnic groups’ history. An important feature of Kyrgyz culture is the organization of the society in tribal groups. According to Minahan (Minahan 2014, p. 154), the society counts 40 clans and is based on kinship relations. During the Soviet era, collectivization of households took place and much of the traditional nomadic lifestyle was destroyed due to forced settlement (Minahan 2014, p. 156). Within the Kyrgyz ethnic group, a cultural divide exists between northern and southern groups (Levinson 1998, p. 145). While northern groups were better protected from outside control by high mountains and remoteness, the pastoral culture prevailed much longer than in southern groups. Among the latter group, many switched to farming and traditional way of life disappeared continuously (Levinson 1998, p. 245).

While religion is not the most important ethnic identifier, Kyrgyz are predominantly Muslim since the 9th century (Levinson 1998, p. 245). Among the Muslims, most are adhering to Sunni Islam. However, according to (Minahan 2014, p. 152), particularly in northern parts of Kyrgyzstan, atheism is widespread reflecting the influence of Soviet rule. In these regions, many Kyrgyz would define themselves as cultural Muslims. In addition, pre-Islamic beliefs still exist alongside the Muslim beliefs (Minahan 2014, p. 154).

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Lenca

TEK code: 102

The Lencas are “Indians of the northern highlands of Honduras and El Salvador” (The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica 2016) and live, according to the EPR coding, in the Northeast of El Salvador on the border to Honduras. Hence the transborder ethnic kin group described here are the Lencas, even though El Salvador and Honduras also have the indigenous group of the Nahuas in common.

The Lencan transnational ethnic group’s identifier used to be their common language (with a Honduran and a Salvadoran version), but this language is extinct today (Brenzinger 2007, p. 70). An identifier, which is not extinct, is their shared traditions, beliefs and practices. Examples include harvest ceremonies, the existence of sacred mountains and hills and the Guancasco ceremony (InterReligious Task Force on Central America 2017; The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica 2016) (Brenzinger 2015, p. 173). Additionally, the Lencas have, to a certain degree, maintained their traditional social structures and their pottery is a part of their culture (Minority Rights Group International 2017; The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica 2016).

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Lezgins

TEK code: 220

Lezgins are politically relevant ethnic groups in Azerbaijan and Russia. The main ethnic identifiers of the Lezgins are their language and the religion. Lezgins speak the Lezgin language. The language that can be divided into three distinct dialects belongs to the North Caucasian languages (Reynolds 2011, pp. 237–38). The language has been officially recognized during the Soviet-era and taught in Schools. However, since the demise of the Soviet Union the future of the language is uncertain as there is a lack of finance to promote the language and Russian, which is the lingua franca of the region, gains dominance in the region, according to Reynolds (Reynolds 2011, p. 238).

Lezgins are predominantly adhering to the Islam. Most Lezgins are Sunni Islam with many among them following the Shafi'i rite (Reynolds 2011, p. 237). It should be noted that there are also some smaller groups of Shi'a Muslims among the Lezgins (Reynolds 2011, p. 237).

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Lunda

TEK code: 412

“Lunda” refers to a group of peoples linked by their history of being a part of the former Lunda Empire. Local group names “reflect either geographical position, topographical features, or names of founding lineages of local ruling dynasties” (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). For example, the Lunda-Chokwe are part of the Lunda group, even though tensions between the Lunda and Chokwe exist (Yakan 1999, p. 266), (Milius 2013). Similarly, the Yeke are considered as a Lunda subgroup (Minahan 2002, p. 968). Since the Lunda are a group of peoples, they don’t speak the same language, but their languages are mutually intelligible (Minahan 2002, p. 967). The Lunda language is called Lunda or Chilunda (Paul M. Lewis, Gary F. Simons and Charles D. Fennig 2015). The Chokwe speak Chokwe, which is a Bantu language, belonging to the Benue-Congo branch of the Niger-Congo languages (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017a).

While today most Lunda are of Catholic faith, they also have an original belief system (Minahan 2002, p. 967). The Lunda religions include a “supreme being who is either a sky or an earth god” and ancestors are being worshipped (**britannica10**). For example, the Lunda religion includes a supreme deity called Nzambi (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). The Chokwe have a creator god called Kalunga and “a series of nature and ancestral spirits (mahamba)” (Federation of the Free States of Africa unknown). Hence, while the names are different, the Lunda religions share similarities, like having a supreme god and the worshipping of ancestors.

The various Lunda groups are historically linked by their former affiliation to the Lunda kingdom, established during the 16th century (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2010; Minorities at Risk Project 2006). Currently, the Lunda in the Shaba/Katanga region in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have (dormant) secessionist demands (Minorities at Risk Project 2006). They are based on the fact that the members of the Luba ethnic group have more access to the resources in this region (Minorities at Risk Project 2003).

The Luba have initiation rites for boys (mukanda) and girls (nkanga) (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). Polygyny is accepted among the chiefly and wealthy classes (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017b). The Lunda-Chokwe are known as exceptional craftsmen, as their masks, ironworks, statues and carved stools show (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017a; Federation of the Free States of Africa unknown).

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Luo

TEK code: 909

The Luo, also called Joluo or Kavirono, live in the flat lands near Lake Victoria in western Kenya and northern Tanzania (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). They are politically relevant in both countries, but their involvement is much more salient in Kenya, where the majority of the Luo live. Further, Luo are found throughout East Africa as agricultural labourers, tenant farmers, and as urban workers (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). The Luo transnational ethnic kin group's identifier is the common language, called Dholuo (Ethnologue 2019). In course of the 20th century, most Luo adopted Christianity, although many continue to follow traditional practices (Levinson 1998).

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Maasai

TEK code: 436

The Maasai, also spelled Masai, are politically relevant in Tanzania and Kenya. They are nomadic pastoralists whose traditional territories stretch from the Rift Valley lakes of Kenya across the Serengeti plains into Tanzania (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018), (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

The term Maasai refers to speakers of the Eastern Sudanic language called Maa of the Nilo-Saharan language family (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Thus, the common language is this transnational ethnic group's identifier. The Maasai are noted throughout the world for their brave warriors. The young men traditionally live in isolation in the bush, learning tribal customs and developing "strength, courage, and endurance" (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

The Kenyan and Tanzanian governments are encouraging the Maasai to make permanent agricultural settlements and to give up the practice of isolating young men, in favour of formal education and greater assimilation (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Further, they have had several ongoing legal disputes with the Tanzanian government and private companies involving land rights (Minority Rights Group International 2018) (cf. EPR comment Tanzania).

To sum up, the Maasai successfully preserved their traditional ways of life to a high degree. However, the struggle to "transmit the intangible aspects of cultural knowledge and sacred practices to younger generations remains a very real concern" (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

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Macedonians

TEK code: 221

Macedonians, sometimes also referred to as Slav Macedonians (Levinson 1998, p. 54), are politically relevant ethnic groups in Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro.

The most commonly referred ethnic identifiers are the language and religion. Macedonians speak the Macedonian language, which belongs to the South Slavic language family (Danforth 2011, p. 247) and is similar to the Bulgarian language according to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 54). With regard to their religion, Macedonians predominantly adhere to the Macedonian Orthodox Church (Danforth 2011, p. 247).

There are heated political debates about the usage and the ownership of the term Macedonia. The identity and history of Macedonia “are extremely controversial subjects; even the name ‘Macedonia’ is contested” (Danforth 2011, p. 247). Yet, in 2018, the name dispute between Greece and Macedonia has officially been settled and the country was renamed “Republic of North Macedonia”. Following Danforth (Danforth 2011, p. 247), “Macedonians themselves and scholars throughout the world use the name as a matter of common sense” which is resolutely denied by Bulgaria and Greece. The position of Greece and Bulgaria on the matter diverge, however. In short, Bulgaria argues that “Macedonians are really Bulgarians” while Greece demands that “only Greeks have the right to use the name Macedonia” by claiming that Ancient Macedonians were themselves Greeks (Danforth 2011, p. 247).

While ethnic Macedonians in Albania are recognized as a minority, their status in Bulgaria and Greece is denied according to Danforth (Danforth 2011, p. 252).

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Makonde

TEK code: 437

The Makonde are a Bantu-speaking people living in north-eastern Mozambique and south-eastern Tanzania (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). They are politically relevant in these two countries. Many Makonde, however, have migrated to other parts of the East African coast in search of employment (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019) (also see (Joshua Project 2019)).

The Makonde transnational ethnic kin group's identifier is the common language. Though they have been under heavy Muslim influence for a very long time (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019), their religious adherence is disputed. The Makonde in Tanzania belong to the "Mainland Muslims" umbrella group. However, it is reported that "while on the surface the Makonde primarily practice Islam but in reality, they are animistic – practicing their traditional religion" (Joshua Project 2019). Further, the Makonde lack an embracing political structure of their own, as their settlements function rather independently (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

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Malays

TEK code: 530

The Malays are an ethnic group of the Malay Peninsula and portions of adjacent islands of Southeast Asia (i.e. Sumatra, Borneo) (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). They are politically relevant in Malaysia, where they form the majority of the total population, and further in Indonesia, Thailand, and Cambodia.

The Malays speak various dialects belonging to the Malayo-Polynesian language family (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Their culture is closely intertwined with Islam, as the vast majority of Malays are Sunni Muslims. In addition to the common language, their Muslim faith is an important identifier for this transnational ethnic kin group in some countries, especially Thailand, where it sets them apart from the remaining population (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

Many Malays are rural people, living in villages rather than towns. Their culture has been strongly influenced by other cultures of Asia from India, Thailand, Java, and Sumatra (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

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Mande

TEK code: 407

The Mandé constitute a group of peoples from western Africa, speaking various Mandé languages and dialects. The term “Mandé” also designates a geographic homeland with varying boundaries linked to countries from the former Mali Empire and “to the areas of these countries that are occupied by Mande language speakers” (World Culture Encyclopedia 2018). Hence, today’s Mandé descend from the inhabitants of the Mali Empire (Minority Rights Group International 2007). Since the Mandé are divided in many different groups, there is regional variation among them (World Culture Encyclopedia 2018). For example, many (but not all) Mandé are Muslims, but their practice of Islam varies (World Culture Encyclopedia 2018). What most of them have in common, however, are patrilineal succession and the fact that they used to have a hierarchical social structure. This structure is ranked “from royalty and noble lineages to commoners, low-status artisan castes, and, formerly, slaves” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2010; World Culture Encyclopedia 2018). Examples of Mandé groups include the Malinke (also called Maninka, Mandinka, Mandingo, or Manding) and the Vai (see Liberia) (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017; The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2012).

The Mandé language group comprises 40 different languages and is a branch of the Niger-Congo language family. Some of the languages and dialects are mutually unintelligible (World Culture Encyclopedia 2018). Among others, the Malinke are a part of the western Mandé language group (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2010).

To sum up, the Mandé are a group of peoples united by their affiliation to the Mandé language group, their regional concentration in western Africa and their descent from the Mali Empire. Many, but not all, Mandé are of Islamic faith and they used to have a hierarchical social structure.

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Mapuche

TEK code: 120

The common identifier of Mapuche is their language, called Mapudgun or Mapuzungun (Center for World Indigenous Studies unknown; Minority Rights Group International 2017). However, according to Minority Rights Group International, in Chile “less than twenty per cent of Mapuche are fluent in their native language (Mapuzungun) today” (Minority Rights Group International 2017). The Mapuche were historically known as “Araucanians” and were divided into three groups called “Picunche”, “Mapuche” and “Huiliche”. However, today all Araucanians identify themselves as Mapuche (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014). The Mapuches also share “many customs and traditions” (Elizabeth Trovall 2017). During the Spanish colonization, Jesuit missions were established in the regions inhabited by the Mapuche. Hence, today Catholicism and the original religious beliefs of the Mapuche coexist. Their original religion includes the belief “in the forces of creation (Ngenechen) and destruction (Wakufu)”, “reverence to spirits (pillan) and ancestors (wangulen), as well as to the forces of nature (ngen)”. Shamanism is also important, since a shaman (called “machi”) “performs ceremonies for curing diseases, warding off evil, influencing weather, harvests, and social interactions” (Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009). Concerning the social organisation of the Mapuche, the community leaders, called “llongkos” are still in an important position. Additionally, different Mapuche organisations are politically active. Some of these organisations advocate a separatist agenda, “in the ethnic group’s ancestral territory of southern Chile and Argentina where most Mapuche are still concentrated”. However, the majority wants “to negotiate with state institutions”. The goal of the negotiations is regional autonomy in Araucania, where Mapuzugun would be the official language (Minority Rights Group International 2017). Culturally, the Mapuche are known for instruments like the flute called “trutruca”, their oral literature tradition, their cloth weaving skills and their jewellery (Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009). They also are known for their competence in the field of natural medicine (Elizabeth Trovall 2017). One of their greatest heroes is “the toqui called Lautaro, who was chosen to do battle against the Spanish invaders” (Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life 2009).

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Marathi

TEK code: 1005

The Marathi are politically relevant in India and Mauritius. They are a linguistically defined transnational ethnic kin group with the Marathi language as their common identifier (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

They are Hindus originating from the present-day state of Maharashtra spanning west-central India (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). The Marathi brought their own language and their Hindu beliefs to the Island of Mauritius (Henry 2000, p. 9). There, they have been prominent in the civil service and police forces (Henry 2000, p. 10).

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Maravi peoples

TEK code: 438

Maravi peoples are politically relevant in Malawi and neighbouring Zambia. They comprise a several Bantu-speaking peoples living in the tree-studded grasslands of Malawi and along the lower Zambezi River (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018b).

The two largest groups are the Chewa and the Nyanja (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018b), which are mentioned by name in the EPR dataset. They are descendants of the clans united in the Maravi Confederacy, also called Maravi Empire, a centralized system of government established about 1480. However, by 1720 the confederacy had broken into several autonomous factions after clan leaders had become economically independent of the central authority by trading with the Portuguese and Arabs in ivory, slaves, and iron (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018a).

In Malawi and Zambia, the prevalent religion is Christianity and to a lesser extent indigenous beliefs and Islam, which cross-cut political units (Joshua Project 2018a), (Joshua Project 2018b). Presently, the most salient identifier of the peoples in this transnational ethnic kin group is their interrelated languages.

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Maya

TEK code: 101

The Mayan transnational ethnic group should be considered as an umbrella group with divisions based on “linguistic and geographic grounds” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). Encyclopaedia Britannica distinguishes at least nine subgroups: the Yucatec Maya, the Lacandón, the K’ichean-speaking peoples, the Mameans, the Q’anjobalans, the Tzotzil and Tzeltal peoples, the Cholans and the Chortí (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). While these peoples have different languages, they still pertain to the Mayan language group. Hence, the group’s identifier is a common language group. They also share the Mayan religion, however it became diluted after the Spanish colonization. This means that the majority is of Christian faith, but their “Christianity is generally overlaid upon the native religion” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). Additionally, they share the common history of the Mayan civilization (peak between 250-1200 CE) and the related cultural heritage, women are often dressed in colourful dresses and “rituals and ceremonies connected to their land and to their calendar are still practiced today“ (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016).

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Mbaka

TEK code: 443

The Mbaka or Ngbaka are politically relevant in the Central African Republic and Congo, DRC. A small number of the group is further reported in the Republic of Congo (Joshua Project 2019), where they, however, do not seek political representation at the national level. The Mbaka transnational ethnic kin group's identifier is the common "Ngbaka Mabo" language (Joshua Project 2019).

They are one of the peoples living along the the Ubangi river forming the border between the Central African Republic and Congo, DRC. These peoples are mainly farmers who use slash-and-burn methods for growing crops (Levinson 1998, p. 117). Today, most Mbaka are Christians, while some still adhere to traditional religions (Joshua Project 2019). Religion, however, cross-cuts political units in the context of this group.

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Mestizos

TEK code: 124

Mestizo means “any person of mixed blood” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2013). In the Philippines it means a person of “mixed foreign (e.g., Chinese) and native ancestry”. However, the transnational Mestizo group in Mexico and the USA denotes persons with mixed indigenous and European ancestry (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2013). The common identifier of this transnational ethnic group is their common ancestry. It “is tied to Latin America’s colonial history and commonly includes having a white and indigenous, or ‘mestizo’, background somewhere in their ancestry” (Ana Gonzalez-Barrera 2015). Originally, “mestizo” was a colonial category (among other categories like “mulatto”), but it had a long-lasting influence on Mexican national identity (Ana Gonzalez-Barrera 2015). Mestizos in Mexico and the USA mostly speak Spanish and are of Catholic faith. However, it is possible that some US-Mestizos are now fully assimilated and don’t speak Spanish anymore.

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Miskitos

TEK code: 103

The identifier of the Miskito transnational ethnic group is their common language, which is the Miskito language (Ethnologue 2017). According to Minority Rights Group International, the language, as well as the Miskito population itself, “has drawn from many separate cultural sources during its evolution” (Minority Rights Group International 2017). Concerning their religious beliefs, they are mainly Christian today, but there remain some beliefs in “harmful spirits and in spirits inhabiting natural phenomena” (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). There are traditional Miskito songs and associated round dances (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). In April 2009 the Miskitos of Nicaragua unilaterally declared independence under the name “Community Nation of Moskitia” (Stephen Gibbs 2009; Blake Schmidt 2017).

References

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Moldovans

TEK code: 239

Moldovans are politically relevant ethnic groups in Moldova, as well as in Russia and in Ukraine.

The most significant ethnic identifiers of the Moldovans are the religion and their language. Moldovans speak a dialect of the Romanian language (Šumi and Toplak 2011, p. 262). Some refer to the language as Romanian, others as Moldovan, which is a reflection of the contested status of the ethnic category of the Moldovans (Šumi and Toplak 2011, p. 262). Proponents of a Moldovan ethnicity refer to the latter term, contesters to the former. Scholars who claim that Moldovans are a distinct ethnic category emphasize that they have been the original inhabitants of the region and “claim a continuous presence since then” (Levinson 1998, p. 56).

Moldovans are predominantly adhering to the Christian Orthodox faith (Šumi and Toplak 2011, p. 262). Religion distinguishes Moldovans from Romanians: “Unlike their Romanian neighbours”, as Worden emphasizes, Moldovans “follow the Eastern or Russian Orthodox Calendar” (Šumi and Toplak 2011, p. 264). In addition, indigenous beliefs and practices exist in combination with Orthodox beliefs, in particular in rural regions (Levinson 1998, p. 56).

In addition to the religion and the language, Moldovans share a rich culture which is known for the traditional folk music and dances (Šumi and Toplak 2011, p. 263).

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Mongols

TEK code: 515

The Mongols are a group of closely related tribal peoples that are politically relevant in Mongolia and China. Their common identifiers are the shared language and nomadic tradition. They are known to be superb horsemen (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a). Originally, they followed shamanistic religious practices, but by the beginning of the 20th century, the Mongols had broadly adopted Tibetan Buddhism, mixed with shamanistic elements. Today, a significant proportion of them are atheistic or non-religious (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b).

Many Mongols still have a close connection with their traditional way of life and the culture of their ancestors, though it has been weakened and come under threat in some areas of China (Minority Rights Group International 2017). As noted in the EPR comment about Mongolia, the distinctions between the Mongol subgroups or tribes are relatively minor and have not become relevant in political terms (Worden, Robert L. & Matles Savada, Andrea 1989).

As a result of migration and wars, ethnic Mongols are found throughout Central Asia today. Their traditional homeland, however, is split between Outer Mongolia, i.e. the independent country of Mongolia, and the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region of China (IMAR). Fuelled by Russian and Japanese interference in the region, there was widespread dissatisfaction in both parts in the beginning of the 20th century, but efforts to unite Inner and Outer Mongolia failed (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a). The border between IMAR and Mongolia has been the site of tensions as China has sought to enforce its policies abroad. Further, their right to self-determination in China is cut back due to authoritarian state policies (Minority Rights Group International 2017).

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Montenegrins

TEK code: 222

Montenegrins are politically relevant ethnic groups in Montenegro, as well as in Serbia. They were also a politically relevant ethnic group in the former state of Serbia and Montenegro.

An important ethnic identifier of the Montenegrins is their language. In addition to the language, Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 99) adds the following distinctions: Montenegrins would be “looking to different culture heroes for inspiration, knowing a different set of folk epics, residing in different regions, and sharing a history of 400 years of armed resistance to Turkish rule”. Montenegrins speak a special dialect of the Serbo-Croat language. More precisely, according to Malešević (Malešević 2011, p. 265) they speak a “ijekavian variant of the Shtokavian dialect of the Serbo-Croatian language”. Since independence of Montenegro from Serbia and Montenegro, this dialect is officially referred to as Montenegrin and figures as the official language in the country’s 2007 Constitution (Malešević 2011, p. 265).

While most of the Montenegrins are Eastern Orthodox, a majority of them adhere to the Serbian Orthodox Church. There are, however, also large groups of followers of the Montenegrin Orthodox Church, Roman Catholic Church or of the Sunni Islam (Malešević 2011, p. 265). Following Malešević (Malešević 2011, p. 267), there is a significant number of Montenegrins are “not particularly religious”.

It should be noted that the ethnic category of Montenegrins is a controversial issue. Among Serbs and even among a part of Montenegrins, many believe that Montenegrins are part of the ethnic category of the Serbs. In fact, particularly in the northern parts of Montenegro, many self-identify themselves as Serbian whereas in southern parts, many self-identify themselves as Montenegrins. Finally, some others even identify themselves as both Serbs and Montenegrins (Malešević 2011, p. 265).

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Moors, Black (Haratins)

TEK code: 402

The Moors live in Mali and Mauritania and can be divided into two castes; the Black Moors (Haratins) and the White Moors (Beydan). The common identifiers of all Moors are their language and religion. They speak dialects of Hassaniya, which is related to Bedouin Arabic, and adhere to Sunni Islam, (Minority Rights Group International 2017). Further, their common history unites them (Unrepresented Nations and People Organization 2017a). They are traditionally herders of goats and sheep, as well as providers of transport by camel and donkey, who migrate between Mali and Mauritania.

The Haratins in Mauritania are the “descendants of black ethnic groups that were captured by the majority white Maures or Berber-Arabs and have been discriminated against and have lived under slavery for years” (Minority Rights Group International 2016). Hence, the Haratins have black African origins but their language, culture and identity are Arab as a result of their enslavement by the White Moors. Their musical traditions reflect their history of slavery (Unrepresented Nations and People Organization 2017b). Today, White and Black Moors can “appear racially indistinct” even though the traditional caste system, based on social and descent criteria, clearly separates the two groups (Minority Rights Group International 2013). While slavery has been abolished in present-day Mauritania, it remains a common practice affecting the Haratins (Minority Rights Group International 2016), (Unrepresented Nations and People Organization 2017a).

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Moors, White (Beydan)

TEK code: 428

The Moors live in Mali and Mauritania and can be divided into two castes; the Black Moors (Haratins) and the White Moors (Beydan). The common identifiers of all Moors are their language and religion. They speak dialects of Hassaniya, which is related to Bedouin Arabic, and adhere to Sunni Islam (Minority Rights Group International 2017). Further, their common history unites them (Unrepresented Nations and People Organization 2017). They are traditionally herders of goats and sheep, as well as providers of transport by camel and donkey, who migrate between Mali and Mauritania.

The White Moors are of Berber Arab and black African ancestry and used to dominate the Black Moors (Minority Rights Group International 2013). They are descendants of black ethnic groups that were captured by the majority White Moors or Berber-Arabs (Minority Rights Group International 2016). Hence, the Haratins have black African origins but assimilated culturally to the White Moors as a result of their enslavement. Today, White and Black Moors can “appear racially indistinct” even though the traditional caste system, based on social and descent criteria, clearly separates the two groups (Minority Rights Group International 2013).

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Ndebele

TEK code: 431

The Ndebele are politically relevant in Zimbabwe and South Africa. The Ndebele transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common name as well as the groups' interrelated languages. However, the literature – as far as consulted – does not cross-reference the two groups. This points to the fact that there are only weak kinship ties between the two peoples based on some ancestral connection and their shared name.

The South African Ndebele, also called Transvaal Ndebele, comprise several Bantu-speaking African peoples who live primarily in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces in South Africa. They are ancient offshoots of the main Nguni-speaking peoples and began migrating to the Transvaal region in the 17th century (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018a).

The Ndebele of Zimbabwe, or Ndebele Proper, are a Bantu-speaking people of south-western Zimbabwe. They split from their ancestors, the Nguni of Natal, in the 19th century (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018b). Their language is called Ndebele and they are kindred to the Zulu (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

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Newars

TEK code: 380

The Newars are politically relevant in Nepal and Bhutan, where they are part of the Lhotsampa umbrella group of Nepali immigrants (Minority Rights Group International 2018). The Newar transnational ethnic group's identifiers are the common ancestry and their language. While they were originally Buddhists, they have been influenced by Hindu culture for over 1000 years. Today, they are either Hindus or combine practices and beliefs from both religions (Levinson 1998, p. 262). Their community is organized in about 70 castes, Buddhist as well as Hindu (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). In Nepal, the Newar have a wide range of occupations (farmers, retail trades, etc.) and some occupy high political and administrative posts (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Meanwhile, in Bhutan, the Lhotsampa form a heterogeneous community bound together by the common Nepali tongue and the Hindu religion. Their distinctiveness makes them a target of discrimination and exclusion by the Bhutanese government, which led to some seeking refuge in camps on the Nepali side of the shared border since the 1980 (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

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Ossetians

TEK code: 223

Ossetians, sometimes also referred to as Alans or Ossetes, are politically relevant ethnic groups in Russia and Georgia.

The most significant ethnic identifier of Ossetians is their language. In contrast to the prevalent Turkic and Caucasian languages spoken in the region, Ossetian is a language that belongs to the Indo-European language family. More specifically, Ossetian has most in common with languages from the eastern subgroup of the Iranian branch, according to Bzarov (Bzarov 2011, p. 279). The language can further be divided into two local dialects: the eastern, Iron dialect and the western, Digora dialect (Bzarov 2011, p. 279). Ossetians are mainly adhering to Eastern Orthodox beliefs. However, a smaller part of Ossetians are Muslim. This division in religious beliefs has century-old roots. Another characteristic worth mentioning is the parallelism with elements of Alan monotheist elements that paves the religious culture of the Ossetians (Bzarov 2011, pp. 279–80).

Refusal of more autonomy for Ossetians of Southern Ossetia in Georgia as well as the demands for a unified territory of South Ossetia with Russia (Levinson 1998, p. 35) resulted in several outbreaks of violent conflicts in the early 1990s and again in the 2000s and finally led to the proclamation of an independent Republic of South Ossetia, which is a controversial issue internationally (Bzarov 2011, pp. 280–81).

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Palestinians

TEK code: 308

The Palestinians don't differ significantly from other Arabs in the Levant in view of their Arabic dialect or their phenotype. It is rather their political status that distinguishes them from their neighbours. They are descendants of the heterogenous Arab people native to the territory of the British mandate of Palestine, which was proclaimed in the Balfour Declaration in 1917 (Rogan 2009, pp. 245–259). The foundation of Israel in 1948 and coinciding Arab-Israeli conflict reduced most of them to refugees in their own homeland and triggered an immense refugee outpour into Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt (Rogan 2009, p. 338). Today, while some Arabs gained Israeli nationality (“Israeli Arabs”) or the respective citizenship of their host countries, the majority of Palestinians remain stateless and registered as refugees with the responsible UN agency UNRWA. The latter live in the Israel occupied Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan (UNRWA 2018). Their long-standing presence in their host countries and repression by the respective governments of Lebanon and Jordan rendered them politically relevant in these two countries.

The large majority of Palestinians adhere to Sunni Muslim faith, yet there are also Christian Arabs in Israel (Minority Rights Group International 2009). Palestinian nationalists usually emphasize that their shared identity as Arabs transcends the religious diversity of their community: thus, both Muslim Arabs and Christian Arabs identify themselves in the first instance as Palestinian Arabs (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

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Papuans

TEK code: 540

The Papuans are the indigenous inhabitants of New Guinea, which is divided between Indonesia in the East and Papua New Guinea in the West. The Papuans form politically relevant groups in both countries.

Almost the whole of New Guinea is occupied by speakers of Papuan languages, which are, however, very diverse. The Papuans speak about 700 different languages, some of which are very similar. This linguistic diversity is unique in the world and ascribed to New Guinea's mountainous topography (Levinson 1998, pp. 269–270).

Although about two-thirds of Papua New Guinea's population is Christian, traditional religious beliefs and rituals are still widely practiced. The bulk of New Guinea's population are subsistence farmers and pig husbandry is widespread (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

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Pashtuns

TEK code: 360

Pashtuns are politically relevant ethnic groups in Afghanistan and Pakistan. They belong to the largest ethnic groups in the area (Minahan 2014, p. 219).

The main ethnic identifiers of the Pashtuns are their Indo-Iranian origin, the language as well as a strong, shared socio-cultural identity (Minahan 2014, pp. 219–224). Pashtuns speak Pashto, a language that belongs to the family of Indo-Iranian languages. Pashto is spoken in four broad dialects and numerous sub-dialects (Minahan 2014, pp. 219–222). Next to Pashto, Pashtuns usually speak a second language such as Urdu, Dari or English (Minahan 2014, p. 220).

In the history of the Pashtuns, tribes have played an important role. Although Pashtuns are a very diverse ethnic group, they share a “strong socio-cultural ethnic identity” (Minahan 2014, p. 222). Exemplary for this shared identity among all tribes and across all ethnic divisions is the *pashtunwali*, a “strict unwritten historical code of honor that includes 10 main principles and obligations” individuals have to follow (Minahan 2014, p. 222).

Religion is not an ethnic identifier of the Pashtuns. While Pashtuns are predominantly Muslim, they are divided in Shi’a and Sunni Muslim, the latter usually adhering to the Hanafi School (Minahan 2014, p. 222). In addition, Ahmadi, Ismaili and Christian minorities exist too (Minahan 2014, p. 222). It should be noted that the relationship between the religious groups in the region is marked by long-lasting conflicts and the frequent outbreak of sectarian violence.

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Poles

TEK code: 224

Poles are politically relevant ethnic groups in Poland as well as in Belarus, Lithuania, Russia.

The most significant ethnic identifier of the Poles is the Polish language and the adherence to Roman Catholicism. Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 63) further adds “residence in Poland or Polish ancestry” and “a strong identification with the Polish nation-state” to the distinctions.

Polish, the principal language of Poles, is a Slavic language. Following Galbraith (Galbraith 2011, pp. 284–85) adherence to Roman Catholicism of most of the Poles has “historically served as a central marker of distinction with neighbouring groups (especially Orthodox Rus/Ukrainians and Russians and Protestant Germans)”. According to the same author (Galbraith 2011, p. 285), the religious practice associated with the Roman Catholicism was also instrumental “in maintaining Polish communities outside of Poland and in the absence of an autonomous Polish state”.

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Pomaks

TEK code: 240

Pomaks, sometimes in Bulgaria also referred to as Bulgarian Muslims, are politically relevant ethnic groups in Bulgaria and Greece.

The most significant ethnic identifiers of the Pomaks are the religion and the language. Pomaks are predominantly Sunni Muslim and a majority among them adhere to the Hanafi School (Frusetta 2011, p. 289). Smaller groups of the Pomaks now adhere to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Frusetta 2011, p. 289). Pomaks speak Bulgarian (Levinson 1998, p. 17). Among the Pomaks in Greece many also speak Turkish (Frusetta 2011, p. 288).

According to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 17), the ancestors of the Pomaks “were converted to Islam during the period of Ottoman rule”. However, there are several disputed scholar accounts about the historic origin of the Pomaks. Depending on whether it is influenced by Bulgarian, Greek or Turkish positions, different explanations regarding the historic origins and the ethnicity are emphasized (Frusetta 2011, p. 288). In Greece, for example, Pomaks are classified as Turks (Levinson 1998, p. 41).

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Punjabis

TEK code: 363

The Punjabis are politically relevant in India and Pakistan. They inhabit the neighbouring Punjab regions in both countries, which formed together one large, unified province, until the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 (Ayres 2008, p. 918). The Punjabi transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language (Singh 2012, p. 163), (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). The partition of Punjab was marked by ethnic cleansing on both sides of the border and exchange of populations resulted in the expulsion of most Punjabi-speaking Muslims from India and of Sikhs and Hindus from Pakistan (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). The differences in terms of religion and castes (in India) cross-cut political units. Besides these differences, Punjabi identity has a long lineage. It reached its peak with the emergence of a sovereign Punjabi state between 1799 and 1849 (Singh 2012, p. 163). Today, the group does not seek a state that unifies all Punjabis but cultural movements to unite the Punjabis in both countries are revived (Ayres 2008, p. 918).

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Quechua

TEK code: 115

The Quechuan (or Kichwa in Ecuador) transnational ethnic group should be considered as an umbrella group, since they have different names in their respective countries and they speak many different dialects, which often are “not mutually intelligible”. (Moseley 2007, p. 162) (Taylor and Williams 2017, p. 249). There are various local ethnic groups, as for example the “Tarabuco, the Jalq’a and the Calcha in Bolivia, or the Otavalos, Natabue-las, and Caranquis in Ecuador” (Skutsch 2005, p. 991). While these peoples have different dialects, they still pertain to the Quechuan language group. Hence, the group’s identifier is a common language. As Skutsch describes: “Quechua is both a language and an ethnic identity” (Skutsch 2005, p. 991). According to the author, the Quechua identity developed as the Spaniards colonized South America and with it the Incan Empire (Quechua was the administrative language of the Inca state). “Quechua became, not just a language, but an identity based on a common language and a shared dif-ference from the Spanish colonizers” (Skutsch 2005, p. 991) (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). The colonization by the Spaniards changed their tra-ditions and belief system. Hence, today their “religion is an amalgam of Roman Catholicism and native folk beliefs“ (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). The traditional elements that remain until today are the belief in supernatural forces governing everyday events, which justifies “making offerings to the powers that control natural forces” (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017). They also believe in Pachamama, a deity representing “Mother Earth” (Center for World Indigenous Studies unknown). On a cul-tural level, they have adapted themselves to the cultures of their countries, “but maintain a strong cultural identity with unique customs and tradi-tions” (Taylor and Williams 2017, p. 249). These include “traditional fibre handicrafts” (of which the style varies according to the region) or arrange-ments like the minka – where the community works on community project - and ayni – where interpersonal favours are exchanged. Women often wear a distinctive pollera skirt and long braids (Skutsch 2005, p. 991) (Taylor and Williams 2017, p. 249) (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016) (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017).

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Roma

TEK code: 225

Roma are politically relevant ethnic groups in numerous countries throughout Central, Western, Eastern and South Eastern Europe. Roma are considered as the largest minority group in Europe (Harper and Timmer 2011, p. 297).

In contrast to widespread beliefs that Roma are a homogeneous population, Roma are “in fact an internally diverse amalgamation of ethnic communities bound together as a political project”, according to Harper and Timmer (Harper and Timmer 2011, p. 297). Even though Roma often speak the language of the country they reside in, the Romany language is said to be a “source of shared identity for Roma in many parts of the world” (Harper and Timmer 2011, pp. 297–98). The Romani language can further be divided into numerous dialects spoken by different groups around the world.

Roma are a very diverse ethnic group. While Roma are sometimes commonly associated with the nomadic lifestyle, Harper and Timmer (Harper and Timmer 2011, p. 299) emphasize that in fact, “today there are only a few traveling groups, primarily concentrated in France and the British Isles”, while the majority would “live in established neighbourhoods and villages” often times already since several generations.

A commonly cited source of common identity among Roma is the “strong tradition of arts and craftsmanship” (Harper and Timmer 2011, p. 299).

Finally, throughout Europe, Roma have suffered from political, social and economic marginalization (Levinson 1998, pp. 8–83). Today many Roma continue to face social discrimination and in some countries Roma still suffer from political and economic discrimination (Harper and Timmer 2011, pp. 297–302).

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Russians

TEK code: 201

The Russians are currently politically relevant in Russia, in a large number of post-Soviet states and Israel. Russians form politically relevant minorities in the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, and Armenia, as well as in Central Asia (Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan). In addition, they are politically relevant in Israel.

A major share of the Russian diaspora in the neighbouring countries of Russia emerged during the Soviet era and “at the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers had become near majorities in many neighbouring regions or countries” (Bouchard 2011, p. 311). The Russian language is the most significant identifier of the transnational ethnic group of Russians. Russian is an Eastern Slavic language and “gained greatest reach during Soviet times” (Bouchard 2011, p. 314).

Another prominent feature is the adherence to the Russian Orthodox Church of a large part of the Russian-speakers (Bouchard 2011, p. 311). This is a legacy of the Russian Christianization in A.D. 869 and a consequence of the state religion of Russian Orthodox Christianity during the Russian Empire (Levinson 1998, p. 60). According to Bouchard (Bouchard 2011, p. 312), the Orthodox Church historically promoted a common culture. Despite the important role of the Orthodox Church, many Russians are “not observant or celebrate other faiths” (Bouchard 2011, p. 311). In fact, there are smaller groups of Russian Jews, particularly relevant in Israel, as well as adherents of other Christian religious groups. It should also be noted that the Russian Jews are coded under two transnational ethnic groups: Russians and Jews. There are a number of political conflicts, mainly about the role of the Russian language, between Russians in diaspora and the local ethnic groups in the Baltic states of Estonia and Latvia as well as in the Ukraine (Bouchard 2011, p. 315). References

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Sahrawis

TEK code: 398

One common identifier of this transnational ethnic group is their language, Hassaniya, an Arabic dialect descending from the Bani Hassan tribe (Housing & Land Rights Network unknown). The Sahrawis are Sunni Muslims. Historically, the Sahrawis (which means “of the desert”) are the indigenous population of the Sahara and were originally “nomadic Berbers of the Sanhaja tribal confederation”. They are of “mixed Berber, Arab and black African descent”. A Sahrawi tribe used to be organised in a djemaa (assembly), which established laws. (Minority Rights Group International 2017). From a cultural point of view, the tent is an important element of their social life. It is not only a living space, but also represents the relations within a family. It is usually made of camel hair and ewe wool. Further, the preparation and drinking of tea is an important aspect of the Sahrawi culture. Tea is associated with traditions and rituals and serving tea is considered as “a sign of generosity, friendliness and hospitality”. Among their traditional dresses, are the Daraa, “a wide, white or blue garment with two large openings to the sides” for the men and the Malhfa, which is for women (Sahara Portal 2017).

There is a debate whether Sahrawi should be equated with Western Sahrawi. According to Zunes and Mund “to be Sahrawi is an ambivalent if not undecided and ambiguous mixture of claims – claims of blood and land”. On the one hand, being Sahrawi could mean “descent from a pre-dominantly Hassaniyyah-speaking social group once found in the area of former Spanish Sahara”. However, it is also possible to add the land criteria, which means that a link to the Western Sahara is included (Zunes and Mund 2010, p. 110). Kymlicka and Pfössl argue against conflating Sahrawi with Western Sahrawi, since “there are also people who can call themselves Sahrawi (on the basis of their culture or blood) but who inhabit areas outside, yet adjacent to, the territory of the former Spanish Sahara.” There are not only Western, but also Moroccan, Algerian and Mauritanian Sahrawis. Nevertheless, they argue, “the idea of a Sahrawi people is very much rooted in the creation of the Spanish Sahara”, when the term “Sahrawi” was used to identify non-Spanish people of the Spanish Sahara (Kymlicka and Pfössl 2014, pp. 143–144).

If one adopts the Western Sahara perspective, the Sahrawis also share a history of resistance, especially against the Spanish, and later Moroccan, occupation of Western Sahara. Since 1884 the Western Sahara was colonized by Spain. On May 10th 1973 the Frente Popular de Liberacion de Saguia el Hamra y Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) was created. Its role was to struggle against the Spanish colonization and it became the political rep-

representative of the Sahrawis. When Spain withdrew on April 14th 1976, it transferred the administration of the territory to Morocco and Mauritania (Minority Rights Group International 2017). While the International Court of Justice expressed that the status of the Western Sahara should be “determined through the free and genuine expression of the Sahrawi people”, Morocco initiated the “Green March”. During this march over 300.000 Moroccans migrated to the concerned territory, the purpose being annexation and a change of the ethnic population structure. On February 27th 1976 the government in exile declared the sovereignty and independence of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). However, until today the Republic is not universally recognized. Until 1991 Morocco and POLISARIO were at war with each other, until a ceasefire and the UN monitoring mission (MINURSO) were established. Until today the majority of the international community desires a referendum on self-determination, but it hasn’t taken place, due to questions of voter eligibility (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). Morocco continues with “policies aimed at Moroccanizing the Western Sahara”. Mauritania on the other hand, has abandoned its territory in 1979 (Housing & Land Rights Network unknown).

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San

TEK code: 434

The San, also called “Bushmen” (pejorative), are considered descendants of the original inhabitants of much of Southern and Eastern Africa and chiefly live in Botswana, Namibia, and south-eastern Angola (Minority Rights Group International 2018a) (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). They are among the most-studied indigenous groups in the world, due to their descent and culture, including hunter-gatherer lifestyles, click languages and ancient rock art. San individuals were some of the first from Africa to have their whole genomes sequenced (Callaway, Ewen 2017).

Politically, they are relevant in South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana, where they tend to be marginalized and fairly organized as a group on the national level. In Angola, they do not seek political representation at the state-level at all. However, emphasizing their status as a much-studied indigenous people, they have been able to act on the supranational level and thereby gain visibility as a marginalized group. Relating to their special status, they were able to claim land rights in Namibia (Minority Rights Group International 2018b) and issue a legal ethics code to scientists in South Africa (Callaway, Ewen 2017).

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Sara

TEK code: 411

The Sara are a “cluster of peoples” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2002). They all speak mutually intelligible dialects pertaining to the Sara language group, which is a part of the Central Sudanic languages of the Nilo-Saharan language family (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2002; Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). There are Eastern and Western Sara dialects, but the languages are similar and mutually intelligible (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996), (Group 2000, p. 183).

Today many Sara are of protestant Christian faith, but they had a pre-colonial religion based on supernatural phenomena (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996). The fact that the Sara aren’t Muslims is and has been a distinctive feature compared to surrounding peoples. This is why they have also been called “Kirdi”, “a name used by Muslims to refer to non-Muslims” (Group 2000, p. 183).

During the nineteenth century, the Sara were victims of slave raiding. Peoples like the Bagirmi even specialized in raiding the Sara, since the enslavement of non-Muslims was accepted (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996), (Group 2000, p. 183). In present-day Chad this also followed geographic patterns, since the peoples from the north raided peoples from the south. French colonialism not only changed Sara society, but it also modified the ethnic balance of power. The French promised to end slave raiding by the Northerners and it left the Sara better educated than the other populations in Chad (Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996; World Culture Encyclopedia 2018). Until today tensions between Northerners and Southerners exist (Group 2000, p. 183).

Sara people do accept polygyny and initiation rites are important (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2002; Encyclopedia of World Cultures 1996).

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Serbs

TEK code: 227

Serbs are politically relevant ethnic groups in Serbia as well as in Montenegro, Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Kosovo, and Slovenia. Serbs were also politically relevant ethnic groups in the former Serbia and Montenegro.

The main ethnic identifier of the ethnic group of the Serbs are the language, the religion as well as some distinct cultural elements. Serbs speak the Serbian language which belongs to the family of South Slavic languages (Prelić 2011, p. 334). The language is written in both Cyrillic and Latin alphabets. The former is figures as the official alphabet in Serbia (Prelić 2011, p. 334). Serbs are predominantly adhering to the Serbian Orthodox Church (Prelić 2011, p. 334). During the socialist era of the Balkan region secularization grew rapidly. However, in the post-socialist era, the relative importance of the Christian religion is said to have increased in recent times according to Prelić's account (Prelić 2011, p. 337). In addition to the Serbian Orthodox Church, pre-Christian religious cults and cultural elements continue to exist to date and serve also as important "symbols of ethnic distinctiveness in relation to other peoples" (Prelić 2011, p. 337).

According to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 99), the origin of the Serbs can be traced back to "an ancient Iranian people who in the 4th-6th centuries merged with Slavic peoples in the region".

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Shan

TEK code: 531

The Shan are a politically relevant group in Thailand and Myanmar. Other ethnonyms for this indigenous group are Dehong, Mau, Ngeo, Ngiao, Ngiaw, Ngio, Ngiow, Sha, Tai Yai (The peoples of the world foundation 2018). Most of them live in Shan State in Myanmar with small groups in Thailand and China (The peoples of the world foundation 2018). Common identifiers of the Shan transnational ethnic group are their common language, known as Shan, which belongs to the Tai linguistic group, and their religion, known as Theravada Buddhism (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

In Myanmar, the Shan dominated much of the territory from the 13th to the 16th century. Later on, they enjoyed considerable local autonomy in an area called Shan State until they lost it under the constitution of 1974. Since then the Shan have frequently been at odds with the national government over the issue of local autonomy and several armed Shan separatist groups were formed in the 1960s. Today, their principal interest has apparently become the illegal production and export of opium (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

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Shi'a Arabs

TEK code: 303

The Shi'a Arabs are politically relevant in countries throughout the Middle East. Countries include Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kuwait and Bahrain. The transnational ethnic group's identifier is their shared Arab ancestry – including the Arab language – as well as their adherence to Shi'a Islam. (Note that the dominant Shi'ite group in Iran are the Persians who are not part of this group.) The Shi'ites are the smaller of the two major branches of Islam, distinguished from the majority Sunnis. The religious movement goes back to a political faction that supported the power of Ali ibn Abi Talib, the fourth caliph after Prophet Mohammed's death. Over time, Shi'ites became a distinct collection of sects, alike in their recognition of Ali and his descendants as the legitimate leaders of the Muslim community. Various subsets of Shi'ism are also found in other parts of the Muslim world (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

Even though the Shi'a – Sunni division plays an important role with regards to political alliances in the Middle East (Harney, John 2016), especially with inclusion of the major Shi'a power of Iran, there are no concrete calls for a unification of the various Shiite groups.

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Shona

TEK code: 419

The Shona are politically relevant in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. While they constitute only a small minority in Mozambique, they account for 70 to 80 percent of Zimbabwe's population (Levinson 1998). The Shona transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language, which encompasses several related Shona languages. Their settlement areas were spread over great distances and they were never unified as a single cultural or political entity in history (Levinson 1998). 'Shona-ness' is thus a creation of the past century, in part fostered by Christian missionaries as well as post-independence political developments (Minority Rights Group International 2018). In Zimbabwe, the Shona are at times split up in several political groups seeking individual representation at the state level. Long term president Robert Mugabe belonged to the subgroup of the Zezuru Shona and instrumentalized his ethnic affiliation.

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Slovenians

TEK code: 228

Slovenians, or Slovenes and sometimes historically also referred to as Kranjci, are politically relevant ethnic groups in Slovenia, as well as in Austria. They were also politically relevant ethnic groups in the former state of Serbia and Montenegro.

The most significant ethnic identifier of the Slovenians is the language and the religion. The Slovenian language belongs to the family of the South Slavic languages (Šumi and Toplak 2011, p. 345). Slovenian is spoken in a variety of different dialects (Šumi and Toplak 2011, p. 345) and not all the dialects are mutually intelligible (Levinson 1998, p. 81).

In addition, a majority of Slovenians is Roman Catholic. After independence the role of the Roman Catholic church increased in significance (Levinson 1998, p. 81). However, nowadays a large number of other religious groups exist too. According to Šumi and Toplak (Šumi and Toplak 2011, p. 345), 42 other registered groups can be found in Slovenia.

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Solomon Islanders

TEK code: 1009

The Solomon Islanders populate a double chain of volcanic islands and coral atolls in Melanesia. The country of the same name comprises most of the Solomons chain, with the exception of Buka and Bougainville, two islands at the north-western end that form an autonomous region of Papua New Guinea (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). These two islands and their population – the Bougainvilleans – are geographically, historically and culturally more closely connected to the western Solomon Islands than the rest of Papua New Guinea (Minority Rights Group International 2018b), justifying the coding of this transnational ethnic kin group.

As opposed to their compatriots, the Bougainvilleans are black, a characteristic which is shared in the Pacific by only a few peoples in the adjacent Solomon Islands (Minority Rights Group International 2018b). Secessionist movements on the island requested a separate state since Papua New Guinea's independence and strove for a possible affiliation with the Solomon Islands (Levinson 1998, p. 271). The island is rich in copper and therefore desired by both countries, which led to allegations that the government of the Solomon Islands supported these aspirations in case of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA), a secessionist movement in the 1990ies (Levinson 1998, p. 271).

The vast majority of the Solomon Islanders is of Melanesian origin, with Polynesian minorities (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019), (Minority Rights Group International 2018a). While almost the entire population is Christian, they speak a variety of more than 60 languages and dialects (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). These differences cross-cut political units.

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Somali

TEK code: 440

The country of Somalia is the national homeland of the Somali ethnic group. Further, they are politically relevant in the neighbouring countries Kenya, Djibouti, and Ethiopia. According to Levinson (Levinson 1998, pp. 164–165), Somali identity is based on speaking the Somali language, adherence to Islam and most importantly, belonging to one of the six clans making up Somali society. The latter, called “rer”, is a large, self-contained kinship group that consists of a number of families claiming common descent from a male ancestor (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

All Somalis demonstrate considerable cultural unity. They are primarily nomadic herdsmen and their conception of Islam is vague, as their religious practices are dominated by the worship of ancestral saints. Somali townspeople and agriculturalists of the urban centres, especially along the coast, have become commercial middlemen between the Arab world and the nomads of the interior regions of the Horn of Africa (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

Intra-ethnic blood feuds or wars and conflicts between Somali tribes and neighbouring groups frequently occurred because of their intense competition for the scarce resources at the Horn of Africa (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Furthermore, the continuing instability in Somalia since the 1990s has also affected Somalis in neighbouring countries. Numerous terrorist attacks in Kenya, claimed by the armed extremist group Al-Shabaab or appearing to involve other Somalis, have led to increasing discrimination of the Somali community there. There were efforts to limit the recognition of citizenship of persons of Somali origin (Minority Rights Group International 2019).

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Sotho

TEK code: 429

The Sotho are a linguistic and cultural group of peoples inhabiting the high grasslands of southern Africa, namely Botswana, South Africa and Lesotho (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). They all speak related Bantu languages, of which the most important are Sepedi (also called Northern Sotho) and Sesotho (also called Southern Sotho). The term Western Sotho is sometimes used for the related language Setswana, which is widely spoken in Botswana and some parts of South Africa (Oxford Dictionaries 2018). The Sotho transnational ethnic group includes the Northern and Southern Sotho who are commonly referred to as "Sotho people" and are politically relevant in South Africa and Lesotho. While Lesotho's population is inhabited by Sesotho people and ethnically homogenous, both the Sepedi and the Sesotho are minorities in the heterogenous South African population (Levinson 1998). According to the assessment above, the Sotho transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language. Traditionally, most Sotho groups relied both on cultivation and on animal husbandry. However, the advent of Christianity, urbanization, and industrialization have resulted in a progressive breakdown of the Sotho's traditional patterns of livelihood and culture. In modern times, a large proportion of Sotho men are often absent from home as migrant labourers, especially in Lesotho where many migrate to neighbouring South Africa for work (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018), (Levinson 1998).

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Southwestern Tai speakers

TEK code: 521

The Southwestern Tai speakers are politically relevant in Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos as well as in Cambodia until they become irrelevant there in 1980. As the name implies, this transnational ethnic kin group is defined based on interrelated languages spoken by the Shan in Myanmar, the Thai in Thailand, the Lao and Lao Tai in Laos. The Southwestern branch of the Tai-speaking population is geographically the most widespread division and represents an expansion to the Central and Northern Tai languages prevalent in China and Vietnam that has occurred more recently (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a) (also see TEK group 529 Central Tai speakers).

According to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 259), Shan is a generic term for Tai speaking peoples outside of Thailand. In Myanmar, they live in Shan State, formed as an entity from pre-independence Shan political units that had been present in Myanmar for 1000 years (Levinson 1998, p. 259). The Shan are extremely conscious of their ethnic identity. Most Shan in Myanmar, however, with the exception of those living in the relatively isolated easternmost strip, are culturally closer to the Bamar people than other Tai speakers in neighbouring countries (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b).

Most Southwestern Tai speakers are Theravada Buddhists (Levinson 1998, pp. 247, 259, 288). Differences in religion and dialects, however, cross-cut political units.

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Sunni Arabs

TEK code: 301

Sunni Arabs are politically relevant in many countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The transnational ethnic group's identifiers are their shared Arab ancestry and the Arab language as well as their adherence to Sunni faith, the main branch of Islam (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). In some countries represented in this TEK group, either Arab ancestry and language or Sunni faith are cross-cutting cleavages in the political realm. Therefore, this group is to be understood as a rather loose umbrella group of all Sunni Arabs worldwide. While especially the Sunni component of their identity keeps giving reason for some transnational political alliances (Harriet Sherwood 2016), there are no calls for tighter political unity among Sunni Arabs in general, as the individual groups are part of particular national and regional settings.

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Swazi

TEK code: 426

The Swazi are politically relevant in Swaziland and South Africa, even though ethnicity is not politicized in Swaziland, which is mainly due to the homogeneity of the society. Named after the group, Swaziland became distinctly Swazi in the early 19th century, when the majority of the Swazi ethnicity were driven into it by the Zulu. Today, smaller numbers also live in South Africa and in Mozambique (Levinson 1998, p. 172). In Mozambique, however, they don't seek political representation at the state level. Their language, siSwati, which is akin to Zulu, is an official language in Swaziland and South Africa (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Most Swazi are nominally Christian but traditional beliefs remain strong (Levinson 1998, p. 172). However, religious variances among the Swazi are not politically relevant. According to these accounts, the Swazi transnational ethnic group's identifiers are their common ancestry and language.

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Swedes

TEK code: 229

Swedes are politically relevant ethnic groups in Finland and Sweden. The most significant ethnic identifier is the Swedish language. Swedish is a North Germanic Language spoken both in Sweden and some parts of Finland, where it enjoys the status of an official language (Daun 2011, pp. 358–59). In Finland, Swedes can further be divided into Swedish-speaking Finns and Åland Islanders. In short, Åland Islanders belong to Finland due to several territorial shifts between Sweden, Russia and Finland from 1809 to 1921. Whereas the Swedish-speaking Finns are to a high degree assimilated, the latter preserved a lot of Swedish cultural elements, which can be explained due to its distinct historical trajectory (Levinson 1998, p. 28). Most religious Swedes adhere to the Lutheran Church (Daun 2011, p. 356). However, it should be noted that secularization rose rapidly in the course of the last decades and today Swedes are counted as among the most secular groups in the world (Daun 2011, p. 358). According to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 85), the Swedes are descendants of reindeer hunters and that can be dated back 14.000 years ago.

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Tajik

TEK code: 230

Tajik are politically relevant ethnic groups in Afghanistan, Iran, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

Tajik, which is at the same time the name of their language, belongs to the family of Persian language and is closely related to the Persian language of Iran (Minahan 2014, p. 251). While Tajik are predominantly Muslim, there are adherents of both Sunni and Shi'a Islam. According to Minahan (Minahan 2014, p. 251), most Tajik follow the former group that can further be narrowed down into the Hanafi school of Sunni. However, regionally concentrated groups of Tajik, in particular in northwestern China, the Badakhshan Province of Afghanistan, and the Gorno-Badakhshan Province in Tajikistan are Shi'a Muslim (Minahan 2014, p. 251). Among the Tajik, three separate cultural divisions exist: Lowland Tajik, mountain Tajik, and Pamiri Tajik (Minahan 2014, p. 251).

There is a rich history of the presence of Tajiks in the region of Central Asia, as they are descendants of the early Indo-European civilizations that dominated the region already around 2000 BCE. Thanks to the remoteness of the region, the Persian speaking Tajik resisted numerous waves of conquests by different rulers and “remained as two enclaves of Indo-Europeans in the largely Turkic Central Asia” (Minahan 2014, pp. 250–51). According to Minahan (Minahan 2014, p. 251), this is the starting point from which the Tajik evolved around the eighth century.

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Tamil

TEK code: 350

The Tamil are politically relevant in Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia, and in South Africa as part of the umbrella group of Asian immigrants. They originally lived in Southern India and have a long history of sea travel and commerce (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Today, emigrant Tamil may further be found in parts of Eastern Africa, Southeast Asia, and islands as far as Fiji or the West Indies (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018), where they, however, do not seek political representation at the state-level. The transnational ethnic group's identifiers are the common language and ancestry. The differences in terms of religion (mainly Hindus, some Christians, Muslims, and Jains) and castes cross-cut political units. More recently, ethnic "Sri Lankan Tamils" sought to create a separate Tamil state for themselves in the north and northeast of Sri Lanka and led an insurgency against the central government which continued into the 21st century (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). Yet, there is no common call for a unified Tamil state outside of Sri Lanka.

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Thai

TEK code: 560

The term “Thai” is applied in different contexts: in the most general sense, it refers to speakers of Tai languages in South East Asia. More specifically, it also refers to the Thai majority group in Thailand, who migrated south from southern China beginning in the 11th century (Levinson 1998, p. 287). This transnational ethnic kin group refers to the second, narrower definition of Thais, who speak the same language within the broader Tai language family. They are politically relevant in Thailand and Vietnam as well as in Cambodia until they are rendered irrelevant there in 1980.

The Thai became dominant in the area that is Thailand today in the 13th century. Their distinctive emerging Thai culture combined the linguistic, cultural, and socio-political heritage of their ancestors in China with elements of Mon and Khmer cultures present in the area before the Thai arrived (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

In contemporary Thailand, those who accept a national identity as Thai include not only the Thai-speaking people of central Thailand but also several other Tai-speaking groups (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). In Vietnam, they are a small minority concentrated in the north-west and western parts of north Vietnam (Minority Rights Group International 2019).

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Tibetans

TEK code: 755

The Tibetans inhabit the Tibet Autonomous Region of China and nearby provinces in southwestern China as well as adjacent areas in Bhutan, India, northern Nepal, and the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a). They all speak the Tibetan language and adhere to Tibetan Buddhism, but follow diverse lifestyles including agriculturalism and nomadism (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a).

The Ngalops or Bhutia predominantly live in northern, central, and western Bhutan, with small populations of Ngalops in Nepal and India (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019c). They are the descendants of Tibetan immigrants who started to migrate southward into Bhutan about a millennium ago. The Ngalops speak a variety of Tibeto-Burman languages, and the most common of these, Dzongkha, is Bhutan's official language. The Ngalops' written language is identical with Tibetan (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b). Thus, the Tibetan transnational ethnic kin group's main identifiers are the common ancestry and language. Further, most Ngalops practice a form of Tibetan Buddhism as well. They belong to the Drukpa subset of the Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019c).

While the Ngalops dominate Bhutan's political life (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b), the Tibetans' struggle for substantial political autonomy in China continues to be suppressed by the state (Levinson 1998). Tibetan and Ngalop populations outside of Bhutan and China are not politically relevant according to EPR coding rules. The relatively large refugee populations of Tibetans in India, Nepal, Bhutan and western states, who left Tibet following a revolt against Chinese rule in 1959 (Levinson 1998), are not politically relevant either.

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Tonga

TEK code: 433

The Tonga are a transnational ethnic group of settled agriculturists in Southern Africa (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018a). Their identifier is the common language, called Tonga as well. Note that there are different, yet interrelated Bantu languages with this name spoken in Southern Africa (Simons, Gary F. and Charles D. Fennig 2018).

Traditionally, the Tonga were one of the main groups inhabiting the Zambezi river's middle course (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018b). In Zimbabwe, however, they were forced to abandon their ancestral homes in 1957–8 after construction of a hydroelectric dam (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

Both the ethnic identity and political organization of the Tonga were chiefly the products of British colonial attempts to administer them. Before, they were loosely organized into clans that had neither leaders nor defined political functions (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018a). Today, they are politically relevant in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi, where they exclusively seek representation at the state-level as part of regional umbrella groups.

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Toubou

TEK code: 422

The Toubou are politically relevant in Niger, Chad, and Libya. Other names for this ethnic group are Toda, Todaga, Todga, Tuda, or Tudaga. An additional denomination, Teda, is sometimes used for the northern grouping only, with Daza or Dasa used as the term for the southern group (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). The Toubou transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). They are inhabitants of the Tibesti Mountains that are centred in the Sahara of northern Chad and reach into Libya and north-eastern Niger (Minority Rights Group International 2018). Traditionally, Toubou are nomadic and live today either as nomadic herdsman or as farmers near oases (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). They are predominantly Muslim, but Islamic practices were not widely followed until well into the 20th century until they started to identify with their respective national identities (Minority Rights Group International 2018).

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Tswana

TEK code: 430

The Tswana live throughout Botswana and in the northern part of South Africa. They are politically relevant in both countries. The Tswana transnational ethnic group's identifier is the common language, which is called Setswana. It is a Bantu language referred to as Western Sotho as well, due to its proximity to the Northern Sotho (Sepedi) and Southern Sotho (Sesotho) languages spoken in South Africa and Lesotho (Oxford Dictionaries 2018), citepencyclopaediabritannica18. Traditionally, the Tswana were not a unified people but were composed of a number of distinct tribes. Intragroup rivalries for farm and grazing land and control of regional trade routes declined under British colonial rule. However, they have reappeared since independence in the form of competition for political power (Levinson 1998).

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Tupi-Guaraní and other indigenous groups

TEK code: 119

Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay have a few indigenous groups in common. The groups discussed here are the (Tupi-) Guaraní and the Nivaclé.

- The common identifier of the (Tupi-) Guaraní is a common language group (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2011; Georgia Mizen 2017). The Tupi-Guaraní languages can be divided into “Tupi in eastern Brazil and Guaraní in Paraguay and Argentina” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). Hence, the Guaraní language is a “branch of the Tupian linguistic group” (Georgia Mizen 2017) (Moseley 2007, pp. 129–130). The Guaraní language is largely used in Paraguay, but the Guaranís additionally have a “secret language” (“used only by religious leaders”) and a “sacred language” (“used only by male and female elders”) (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017a). Their religion has been strongly influenced by the Spanish colonization. The non-Christian elements of their belief system include the belief in “a divine creator and destroyer called Ñamandú, who ruled over a pantheon of gods” (Georgia Mizen 2017). They also believe in spirits (inhabiting all living things) and shamanism (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017a). However, “not all Guaranís have the same beliefs”. A further commonality is that they believe that each person possesses an earthly and a divine soul (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017a).

- The common identifier of the Nivaclé is their language (Moseley 2007, pp. 154–155). During the 1930s and 1940s many of the Nivaclé integrated Mennonite settlements, since they were looking for work (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017b). Hence, Catholicism and the Mennonites have influenced their religion. Their original belief system includes shamanism, but before contact with the missionaries they “had no belief in a supreme creator of the world”. Hence, the result today is that they have a mix of their ancient beliefs and Christianity (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017b). They have no social classes, but it is expected that those with “the highest standing” have to render the greatest service to the community (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017b). Finally, their arts constitute “signs of ethnic identity”. Until today the Nivaclé art repertoire includes “glass bead embroidery, ceramics, wool weaving, cordage making and wood sculpting” (World Culture Encyclopedia 2017c).

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Turkmen

TEK code: 235

Turkmen are politically relevant ethnic groups in Afghanistan, Iran, Russia, and Turkmenistan.

The most significant ethnic identifiers of the Turkmen are their language, the religion as well as their shared, rich tradition of epic stories, heroic tales and other forms of art (Minahan 2014, p. 272).

The Turkmen language is part of the Oghuz Turkic language family and according to Minahan (Minahan 2014, p. 272) closely related to Turkish, Azeri and Uzbek. The language is very diverse, spoken in at least 11 regional dialects and especially in former Soviet regions influenced by Russian (Minahan 2014, p. 275). In Iran and Afghanistan, Turkmen speak usually both Turkmen as well as the respective local language (Minahan 2014, p. 275).

Turkmen are predominantly adhering to Sunni Islam. In parallel to their Muslim belief, many pre-Islamic rituals and practices continue to play an important role (Minahan 2014, p. 275). It should be noted that there are also small groups of Christian Turkmen (Minahan 2014, p. 275).

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Tutsi

TEK code: 442

The Tutsi are politically relevant in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Congo, DRC. In Rwanda and Burundi, they formed the traditional aristocratic minority over the Hutu population. In both countries, ethnic tensions between the two groups have persisted throughout the second half of the 20th century and ever since, culminating in the genocidal campaign against the Rwandan Tutsi in 1994 (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). The presence of the Tutsi in Uganda and Congo, DRC, who partly arrived there as refugees of the conflicts in their homelands, led to further ethnic tensions in the host countries (Minority Rights Group International 2019a), (Minority Rights Group International 2019b).

The Hutu and Tutsi cultures gradually integrated over the centuries. The Tutsi adopted the mutually intelligible Bantu languages Rwanda and Rundi, which were originally spoken by the Hutu. Further, they share a similar kinship and clan system and the central importance of cattle for their lifestyles (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). However, the groups differ in physical appearance, as the Tutsi are rather tall and thin and the Hutu short and stout (Levinson 1998, p. 159). The Tutsi's religious beliefs, which include forms of animism and Christianity, also cross-cut political units (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

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Ukrainians

TEK code: 233

Ukrainians are politically relevant ethnic groups in Ukraine, as well as in Estonia, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, Kazakhstan and Russia.

The most significant ethnic identifiers of the Ukrainians are their language, religion as well as a distinct culture that reflects influences from various eastern and western Slavic as well as more ancient traditions (Kuzio 2011). A majority of Ukrainians speak Ukrainian, an East Slavic language that is intelligible to Poles and Russians (Kuzio 2011, p. 373). A smaller part of approximately 30 percent of Ukrainians speak Russian as native language (Kuzio 2011, p. 373). They are sometimes referred to as Russophone Ukrainians (Stebelsky 2009, p. 79).

Ukrainians are predominantly adhering to either the Orthodox Church or the Greek Catholic Church, which follow the Byzantine rite (Kuzio 2011, p. 373).

According to Kuzio (Kuzio 2011, p. 373), Ukrainians are said to have their roots in the Trypillian culture which resided in Eastern Europe from 4000 to 3000 BCE. In addition, as a consequence of its strategic settlement area, the Ukrainian culture features influences from eastern and western Slavic traditions (Kuzio 2011, p. 373).

Ukrainians in Russia count as one of the largest ethnic minority groups in Russia (Kuzio 2011, p. 373). According to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 25), in Estonia only few of the Ukrainians speak Estonian and in they “tend to affiliate with the Russians”. The affiliation with Russian minorities is a pattern that seems to be recur in Latvia (Levinson 1998, p. 51), and in Moldova (Levinson 1998, p. 56). In Poland, parts of the Ukrainian minorities from southern regions have experienced forced displacement to northern parts whereas others assimilated according to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 63).

Finally, it should be noted that self-identification as ethnic Ukrainians tends to vary over time and a clear-cut distinction between Russians and Ukrainians in Ukraine is in many cases not possible as some identify with both ethnicities (Stebelsky 2009, p. 79). However, following Kuzio (Kuzio 2015, p. 164) this latter group has declined as a consequence of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine: “[t]he number of Russian-speaking Eastern Ukrainians who held a bifurcated Russian-Ukrainian identity (with Soviet or pan-Soviet overtones) has declined as Russia’s interventions produced pressure upon individuals to take sides”.

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Uyghur

TEK code: 241

Uyghur are politically relevant ethnic groups in China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. Uyghur are Turkic people that mainly live in large oases centres in East and Central Asia (Minahan 2014, p. 288).

The most significant ethnic identifier of the Uyghur, also referred to as Uyighur, is their adherence to Islamic beliefs (Levinson 1998, p. 215). Other distinctions are based on their language and centuries-old culture.

Uyghur predominantly adhere to Islam and among the Muslim, a majority follows Sunni beliefs (Minahan 2014, p. 288). Particularly characteristic of the Uyghur religion landscape is the existence of earlier pre-Islamic rituals and customs that continue to play an important role in Uyghur society in parallel to the Muslim belief (Minahan 2014, p. 288). According to Minahan (Minahan 2014, p. 289), among those pre-Islamic influences are many elements from earlier Buddhist and shamanistic religions.

Uyghur speak Vigur. Vigur, also known as New Uyghur, is a Turkic language (Minahan 2014, p. 288). More specifically, within Turkic languages Vigur belongs to the Uyghur Chagatai family (Minahan 2014, p. 288). Vigur is a diverse language that with numerous regional dialects and sub-dialects spoken by Uyghur (Minahan 2014, p. 290). The language knows both the Latin as well as the Arabic script with the former being the officially recognized way of writing Vigur (Minahan 2014, p. 290).

The Uyghur culture reflects both influences from the early Turkic culture as well as elements from the later Muslim culture (Minahan 2014, p. 288). Thanks to the strategic position on the Silk Road trade routes of Uyghur settlement areas, their culture has also been influenced by cultural aspects of European and Oriental peoples (Minahan 2014, p. 289). An especially famous form of cultural practices shared by Uyghur communities is called Muqam (UNESCO 2018). Muqam practices consist of a variety of songs, dances, folk and classic music and they count as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO (UNESCO 2018).

The Uyghur communities belong to the largest ethnic minorities of China (UNESCO 2018). Following Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 246), Uyghurs “were at times caught in middle of Soviet-China border disputes” which can be explained by their strategically important geographic settlement area. In particular in China, ethnic and religious relations with other groups are difficult. According to Minahan (Minahan 2014, pp. 291–92), many efforts of past rulers and state authorities designed to increase the national assimilation led to religious and ethnic grievances among Uyghur communities.

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Uzbek

TEK code: 234

Uzbek, or O'zbek, are politically relevant ethnic groups in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Counting between 28 to 30 million people, Uzbek are the largest ethnic group of Central Asia (Minahan 2014, p. 293).

The main ethnic identifier are the adherence to Sunni Islam, the Uzbek language as well as the shared, century old culture (Levinson 1998, p. 296). Uzbek are predominantly Sunni Muslim and many among those follow the Hanafi school (Minahan 2014, p. 293). Today, a significant number of Uzbek consider themselves as atheists, which reflects the decades of anti-religious propaganda and anti-Islam campaign that started around 1928 under the Soviet era (Minahan 2014, pp. 295–96). In general, Uzbek Muslim have a reputation of being more secular than the neighbouring Central Asian peoples (Minahan 2014, p. 295). However, since its independence a renewed emergence of Islamic leadership has been observed in Uzbekistan (Levinson 1998, p. 297).

The Uzbek language belongs to the group of Eastern Turkic or Karluk languages. Since independence from the Soviet Union the language is written in a modified Latin alphabet and is considered as an important cultural element of Uzbek culture (Minahan 2014, pp. 294–6).

According to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 296), the Uzbek emerged from “clans and tribes that vied for control of Central Asia from the 12th century through the 15th century”. Until today, 92 distinct Uzbek tribes exist (Minahan 2014, p. 293) and they continue to play an important role in society where they often compete with national loyalty according to Levinson (Levinson 1998, p. 296).

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Vietnamese

TEK code: 510

The Vietnamese are politically relevant in Vietnam and Cambodia as well as the former Republic of Vietnam. There is a significant Vietnamese diaspora around the world, but except for those in Cambodia, overseas populations of Vietnamese, called “Viet kieu”, are not politically relevant at the state level.

The Vietnamese constitute the large majority in Vietnam who trace their ancestry back to the first Vietnamese state in the area appearing more than two thousand years ago (Levinson 1998, p. 299). They speak the Vietnamese language, which is the official language of the country (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019a). The common ancestry and language are the Vietnamese transnational ethnic kin group’s main identifiers.

The Vietnamese diaspora was largely created as a result of international and regional political turmoil in the 1970s and early 1980s (Chan and Tran 2011, p. 1104). The common term “Boat people” originally referred to the thousands of Vietnamese refugees who fled their country by sea following the collapse of the South Vietnamese government in 1975 (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019b). Despite the fact that a large proportion of them were once opponents of the communist state, an increasing number of overseas Vietnamese are returning to their home country since the late 1990s, encouraged by the Vietnamese leadership to contribute to the motherland’s development (Chan and Tran 2011, p. 1102).

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Wa

TEK code: 534

The Wa are an indigenous mountain people living in China, Myanmar and Thailand (Joshua Project 2018). Other names for the group are K'awa, Kawa, Va, Vo, Wa Pwi, Wakut (The peoples of the world foundation 2018). They are politically relevant minorities in China and Myanmar, where the majority of the group lives. Before the mid-twentieth century, they lived in a mostly autonomous contiguous region. Only after 1960 were the new modern nation-states of Burma and China able to revise and impose a border, dividing the ancient Wa lands between them (Fiskesjö 2017). While the Wa are predominantly Buddhist today (a small number have become Christian), traditional Animism plays a role in their beliefs and practices as well (The peoples of the world foundation 2018). In addition to their shared cultural heritage, an identifier of the Wa transnational ethnic group is their common language, an Austroasiatic language called Wa as well (The peoples of the world foundation 2018).

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Wayuu

TEK code: 111

Venezuela and Colombia have more than one indigenous group in common. Examples include the Barí, Yukpa and the Wayuu people (Minority Rights Group International 2008; Minorities at Risk Project 2006). This group's focus is the Wayuu people (also known as Guajiro). They make up more than half of Venezuela's indigenous population and an important share of the indigenous population of Colombia (Minorities at Risk Project 2006). They inhabit the Guajira peninsula, which is a part of Colombia and Venezuela (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2016). The common identifier of this transnational ethnic group is the common language, which is called Wayuunaiki or Guajiro (Anny Wooldridge 2017; Manuel Zapata Olivella unknown). They also share spiritual beliefs, which include the god "Maleiwa", the meaning of dreams, shamanism and spirits of their ancestors. Compared to other indigenous groups, Catholicism didn't spread among the Wayuu people (Camino Filmverleih GmbH 2016; Manuel Zapata Olivella unknown). They also share a culture, traditions and their social organisation. They live in huts called "rancherías" and women "own the houses and run the families, while the fathers work with the animals and land" (Anny Wooldridge 2017). There is a clan structure and the family structure is matrilineal. Men have the possibility to live polygamous and marriages are often arranged and accompanied by a dowry to the woman's family (Portal La Guajira 2012; Manuel Zapata Olivella unknown). Finally, an important aspect of their culture is the weaving of bags called "Mochilas" (Wayuu Tribe 2013).

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Yao

TEK code: 427

The Yao include various Bantu-speaking peoples inhabiting southernmost Tanzania, the region between the Rovuma and Lugenda rivers in Mozambique, and the southern part of Malawi (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). They are politically relevant in all three countries as part of larger umbrella groups.

Traditionally, the Yao acted as traders plying between the inland tribes and the Arabs on the east coast. Consequently, through contact with Arabs, most Yao are Muslims today (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018). While the Yao people share their common ancestry, lifestyle, and language, they were never united but used to live in small groups ruled by chiefs (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018).

Besides speaking the Yao language, some also use Chichewa and Standard Arabic (Ethnologue 2018).

The African Yao should not be confused with the Yao (Mien) of South East Asia.

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Yao (Mien)

TEK code: 602

The Yao, also called Mien, are politically relevant in China, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. In Vietnam, they are known under the name Dao. More recently, several thousand Yao refugees from Laos have also settled in North America, Australia, and France (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019).

The Yao (Mien) transnational ethnic kin group's identifier is the common language. They speak dialects of the Hmong-Mien languages (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). Differences in religious adherence cross-cut political units (Minority Rights Group International 2019).

Their society is organized around a clan structure that enables individuals living in very dispersed areas to have a sense of kinship (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). The Yao (Mien) originate in southern China, having migrated south only about 200 years ago (Minority Rights Group International 2019), (Levinson 1998, p. 248).

This group is not to be confused with a group of Bantu-speaking peoples in southern Africa called Yao as well.

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Yoruba

TEK code: 406

The common identifiers of the Yoruba are their common language, history and culture (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014b; World Culture Encyclopedia 2018). However, they were never a centralised political unit (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014b). Yoruba subgroups include the Awori, the Ijesha, the Oyo, the Ife, the Egba, the Egbado, the Ketu, the Ijebu, the Ondo, the Ekiti, the Yagba, and the Igbomina (International Encyclopedia of Marriage and Family 2003). Their language is called Yoruba and it is part of the Benue-Congo branch of the Niger-Congo language family (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014b; World Culture Encyclopedia 2018).

Today many Yoruba are Christians or Muslims, but they also have an original traditional religion, which has survived. Their traditional belief systems includes “a supreme creator and some 400 lesser gods and spirits” (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014b). One of the deities, called Odudwa, is considered to be “the creator of the earth and the ancestor of the Yoruba kings”. (GlobalSecurity.org 2018). Since the Yoruba have so many deities, they have been compared to the Ancient Greeks (University of Iowa Museum of Art unknown). Until today the Yoruba have many popular religious festivals (World Culture Encyclopedia 2018; Rolando Y. Wee 2017).

The Yoruba also share a common history. They have lived for centuries in today’s Nigeria and Benin, where “they have founded great African empires and forged a cultural legacy” (Rolando Y. Wee 2017). The Yoruba kingdoms were not centralized, but its inhabitants were “the most urbanized Africans of precolonial times”. Each Yoruba kingdom had a capital city and was “ruled by a hereditary king, or oba”. The towns of the Yoruba kingdoms exist until today, as the examples of Oyo, Ile-Ife, Ilesha, Ibadan, Ilorin, Ijebu-Ode and Ikere-Ekiti show (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014a).

The Yoruba society is patrilineal and the kingships and the oba exist until today. However, they have only kept a “hint of their former political power“. The oba are also considered as ritual leaders and are sacred (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014b).

From a cultural perspective, the Yoruba are known for their drums, festivals, literature and craftsmanship, especially bronze casting (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica 2014b; Rolando Y. Wee 2017). The drums, among others the hourglass-shaped “talking drum”, are an important part of the music played at the religious festivals (World Culture Encyclopedia 2018; Rolando Y. Wee 2017).

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Zaghawa

TEK code: 425

The Zaghawa people live in adjacent areas in eastern Chad and western Sudan, including the Darfur region. They are politically relevant in both countries. An alternative name for this group is Beri. The transnational ethnic group shares several common identifiers, such as ancestry and language, also called Zaghawa, as well as Muslim faith (Joshua Project 2000). They have been caught up in the Darfur crisis in Sudan since 2003. Many of the Sudanese Zaghawa live in refugee camps in Darfur and eastern Chad (Roth 2015, p. 254). Meanwhile, they have politically dominated Chad, especially since the current president Idriss Déby – a Zaghawa – seized power in 1990. A feared army unit answerable to the president, called the Republican Guard, is made up mostly of ethnic kinsmen and is considered to be responsible for much of the intrastate brutality and bloodshed of the 1990s (Minority Rights Group International 2000).

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