

THE GLOBAL WAR ON TRIBES



Afghanistan

Guatemala

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Counterpunch, Z article : <http://www.counterpunch.org/grossman04132010.html>

“Global War on Terror”

Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen and Somalia in name of fighting Islamist “terrorism”

Mainly targeting “tribal regions” as “festering sores,” and “breeding grounds” of terror



Yemen’s “mountainous terrain, poverty and lawless tribal society make it a close match for Afghanistan as a new terrorist haven.”
--*London Times* (1/5/10)



Tribal regions

Local areas where tribal social organization often trumps state, ethnic, and even religious identities.

Tribal peoples have a strongly localized orientation, tied to a particular place.

Traditional societies are based on a common culture, dialect, and kinship ties (single or multiple clans).

Not necessarily Indigenous peoples (who generally follow nature-centered spiritual and cultural systems)
Rural Middle East & Central Asia have been Islamicized or Christianized, but still retain ancient social bonds.

Tribes ≠ Ethnic nations

Ethnic group (language) = Pashtun, Kurdish, Somali, Tajik, etc.

Can be territorialized as nation (Lakota Nation) or state (France);

Colonial powers denigrated ethnic nations as mere “tribes”

Tribe (clan/kinship) = *Smaller and older regional clans and dialects;*

Building blocks of ethnic nations; layer of identity beneath ethnicity



Zubaydi, Jibbur (Iraq)

Durrani, Ghilzai (Afghanistan)

Wazir, Mehsud (Pakistan)

Wahidi, Zaydi (Yemen)

Darod, Hawiye (Somalia)

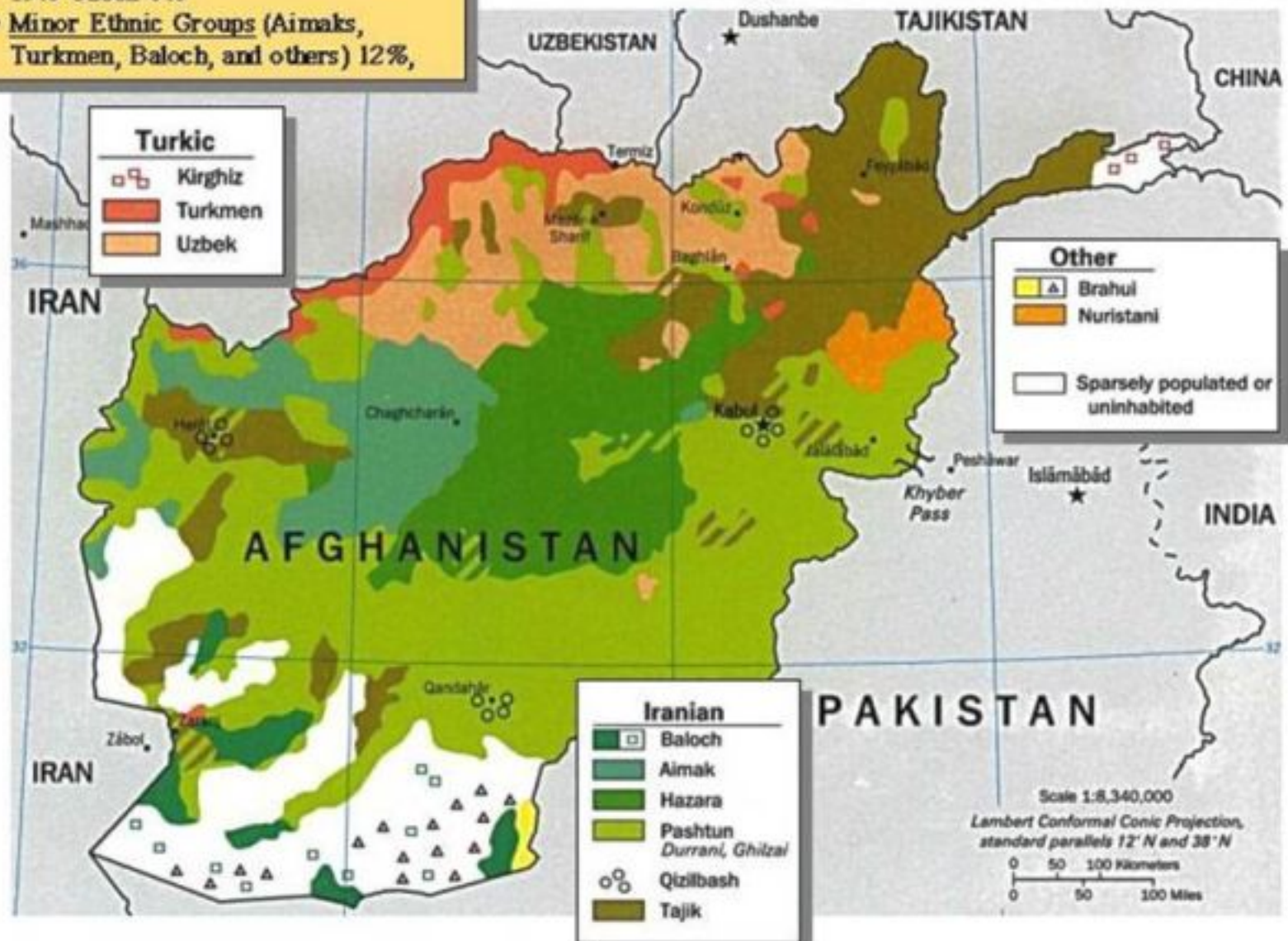
Oglála, Sičhángu “bands” (Lakota Nation)



Afghan ethnic geography

- Pashtun 38%, Tajik 25%, Hazara 19% Uzbek 6%
- Minor Ethnic Groups (Aimaks, Turkmen, Baloch, and others) 12%,

Afghanistan: Ethnic Mix



Ethnic territories





Durand Line Divides Pashtuns

Both sides in conflict are Islamist, anti-democratic, opium-financed

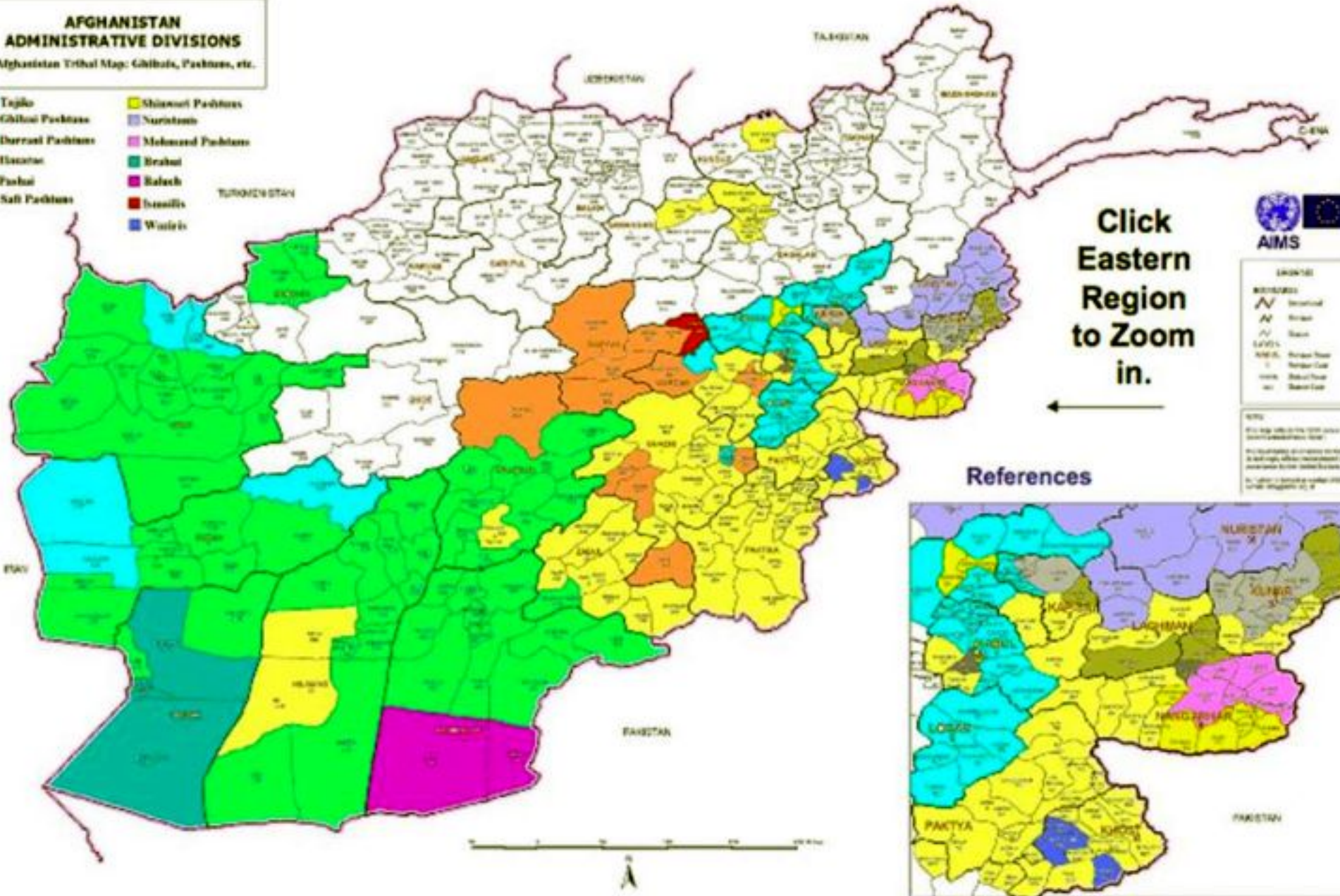
Taliban as Pashtun Nationalists, in both Afghanistan & Pakistan

Afghan Tribes



AFGHANISTAN ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS
Afghanistan Tribal Map: Ghilzai, Pashtun, etc.

Togli	Shikhanzai Pashtuns
Ghilzai Pashtuns	Nuristanis
Durrani Pashtuns	Malozai Pashtuns
Hazaras	Brahui
Pashtun	Baluch
Salt Pashtuns	Ismailis
	Wakilis



Click Eastern Region to Zoom in.

AIMS

Legend:

- ROADS
- INTERNATIONAL
- NATIONAL
- LOCAL
- PROVINCE
- COUNTY
- DISTRICT
- VILLAGE

Scale: 1:100,000

© 2000 AIMS

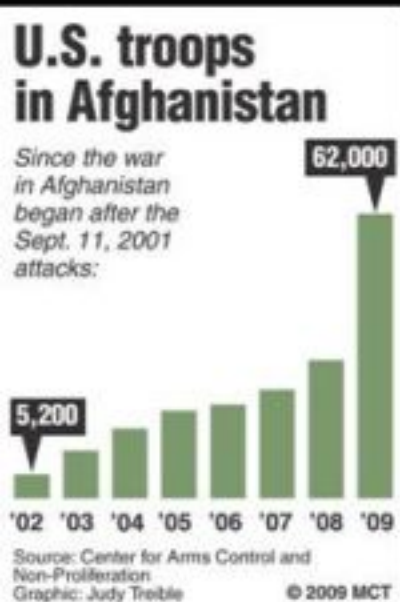
References





Afghan strategy

“American civilian and military leaders are turning to some of these tribes as potentially their best hope for success. Led by councils of elders, tribes provided their members with protection, financial support, a means to resolve disputes .Successfully turning Pashtun tribes against the Taliban could deliver a serious blow to the insurgency.” --*New York Times* (1/29/10)



“Ahmed Rashid, a Pakistani journalist predicted that arming Pashtun militias in the south would renew tribal rivalries that had been dormant for years; some analysts believe that has happened.”

--Council on Foreign Relations (11/7/08)

Northwest Pakistan



* North West Frontier Province (NWFP)
(renamed Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa)

* Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)

* Taliban also in Quetta
(Baluchistan in SW)



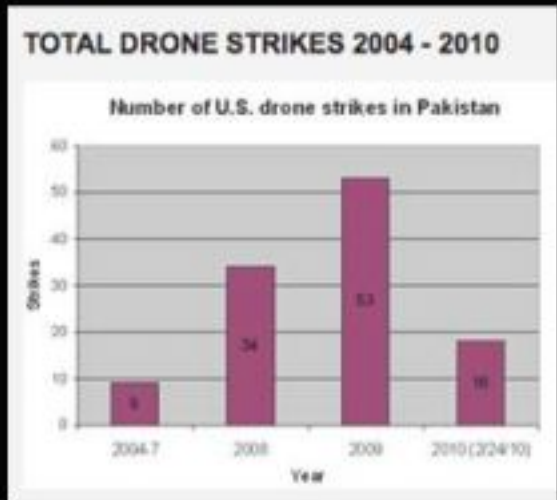
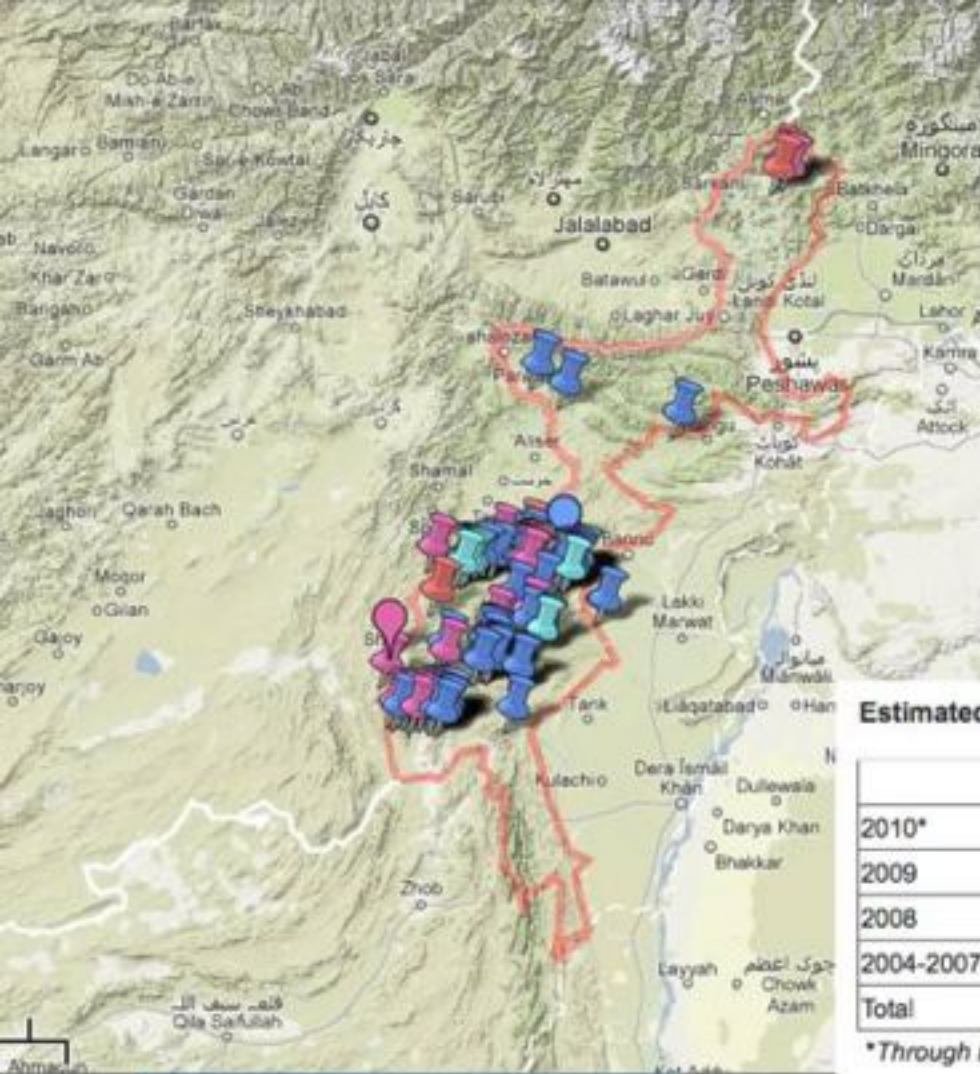
Northwest Pakistan Tribal Region

“the tribes are mostly free to decide matters among themselves, which they do, remarkably harmoniously, through jirgas and riwaj—tribal customary law.”

The Economist (12/30/09)



Drone attacks



Estimated Total Deaths from U.S. Predator Strikes in Pakistan, 2004 - 2010

	Deaths (low)	Deaths (high)
2010*	100	164
2009	372	632
2008	275	310
2004-2007	87	109
Total	834	1,216

*Through February 25, 2010

Estimated Militant Deaths from U.S. Predator Strikes in Pakistan 2004 - 2010

	Deaths (low)	Deaths (high)
2010*	83	141
2009	284	479
2008	105	130
2004-2007	77	100
Total	549	849

*Through February 25, 2010



Distribution of Ethnoreligious Groups and Major Tribes

Iraq

Tribes straddle Sunni-Shi'a Divide

Not just "tribalism" but inclusion of human difference



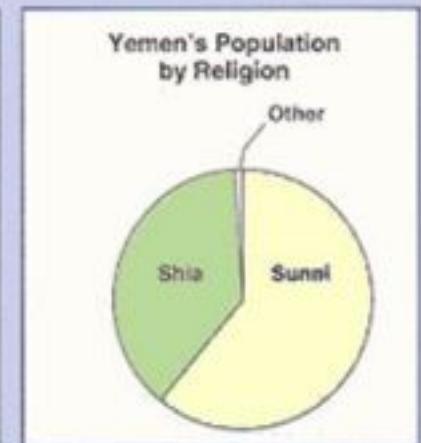
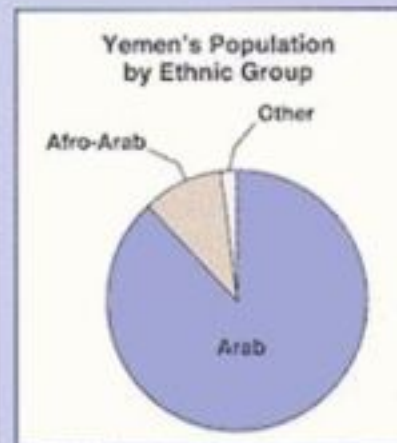
Distribution of Ethnoreligious Groups and Key Tribal Areas

Yemen

Yemeni/Saudi war in north against Zaydis

War in south against secessionists

U.S. views south as Al Qaeda haven



Yemen strategy

“Al-Qaeda operatives have found safe haven in some of Yemen’s tribal regions, but their goal of establishing an international caliphate conflicts with many local political realities, potentially limiting this hospitality. Tribal society in Yemen is regulated by complex rules that bind its members to one another. Much of Yemen’s periphery is without effective formal, state-administered governance, but this does not mean that these regions are ungoverned—or there for the taking, particularly by outsiders to the area”
-- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (3/10)

Attacking Al Qaeda in Yemen

For months, the United States has waged a military campaign against Al Qaeda in Yemen, as operatives have created strongholds there. Obama administration officials say that the strikes have killed dozens of militants, although they add that none of the group’s leaders have been killed. Critics say the strikes have sometimes been counterproductive, missing targets and killing civilians, which has generated resentment among local people.



Ethnic Groups

Somalia

Somalia's Clan Families and Major Subclans

Percent

Ethnic minorities 6

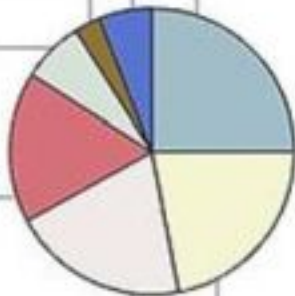
Digil 3

Dir 7

Gadabursi

Issa

Rahanwein 17



Darod 20

Dolbohanta

Majertain

Marehan

Ogadeni

Warsangeli

Hawiya 25

Abgal

Ajuran

Degodia

Habr Gedir

Hawadle

Murosade

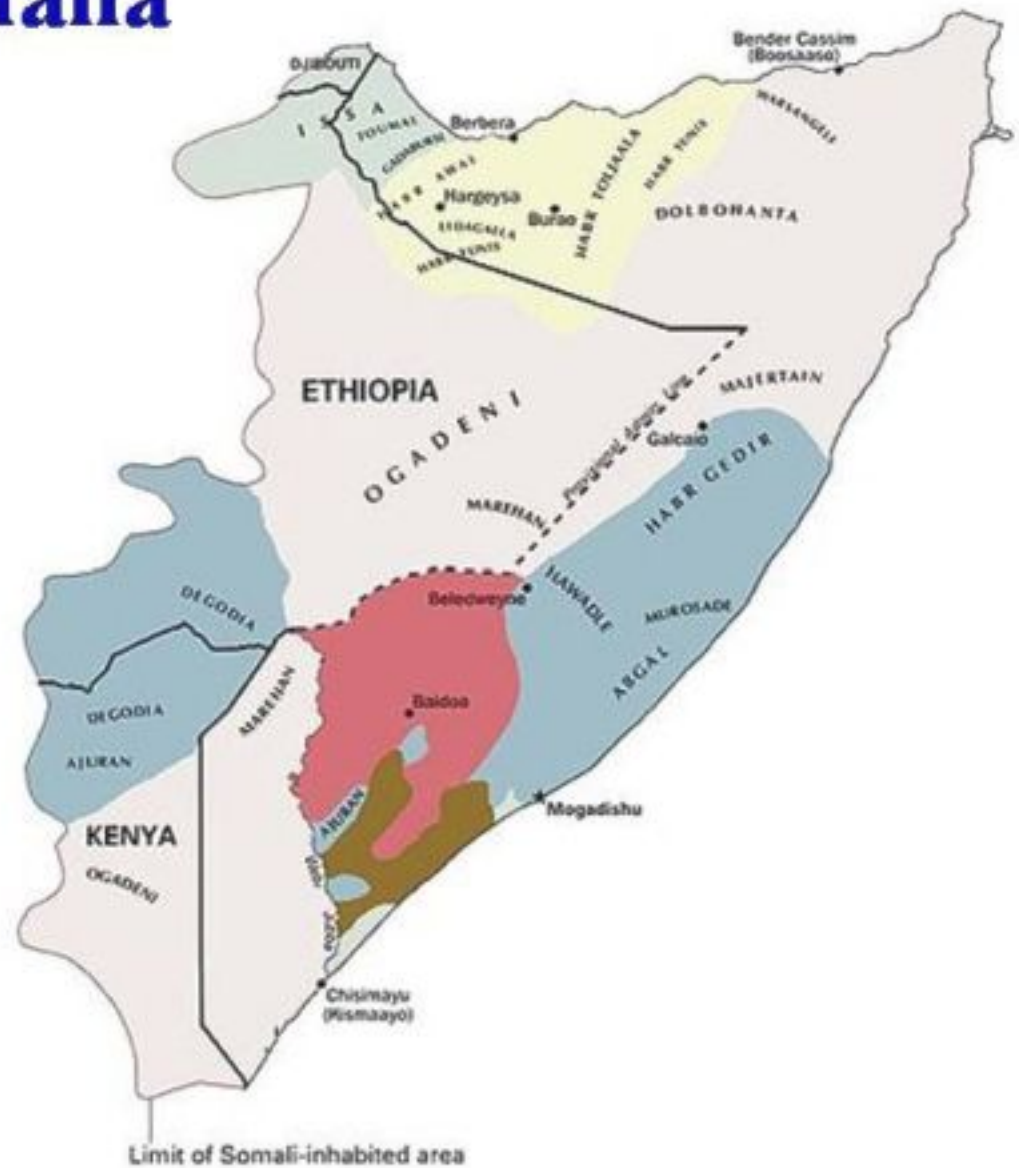
Ishaak 22

Eidagalla

Habr Awal

Habr Toljaala

Habr Yunis



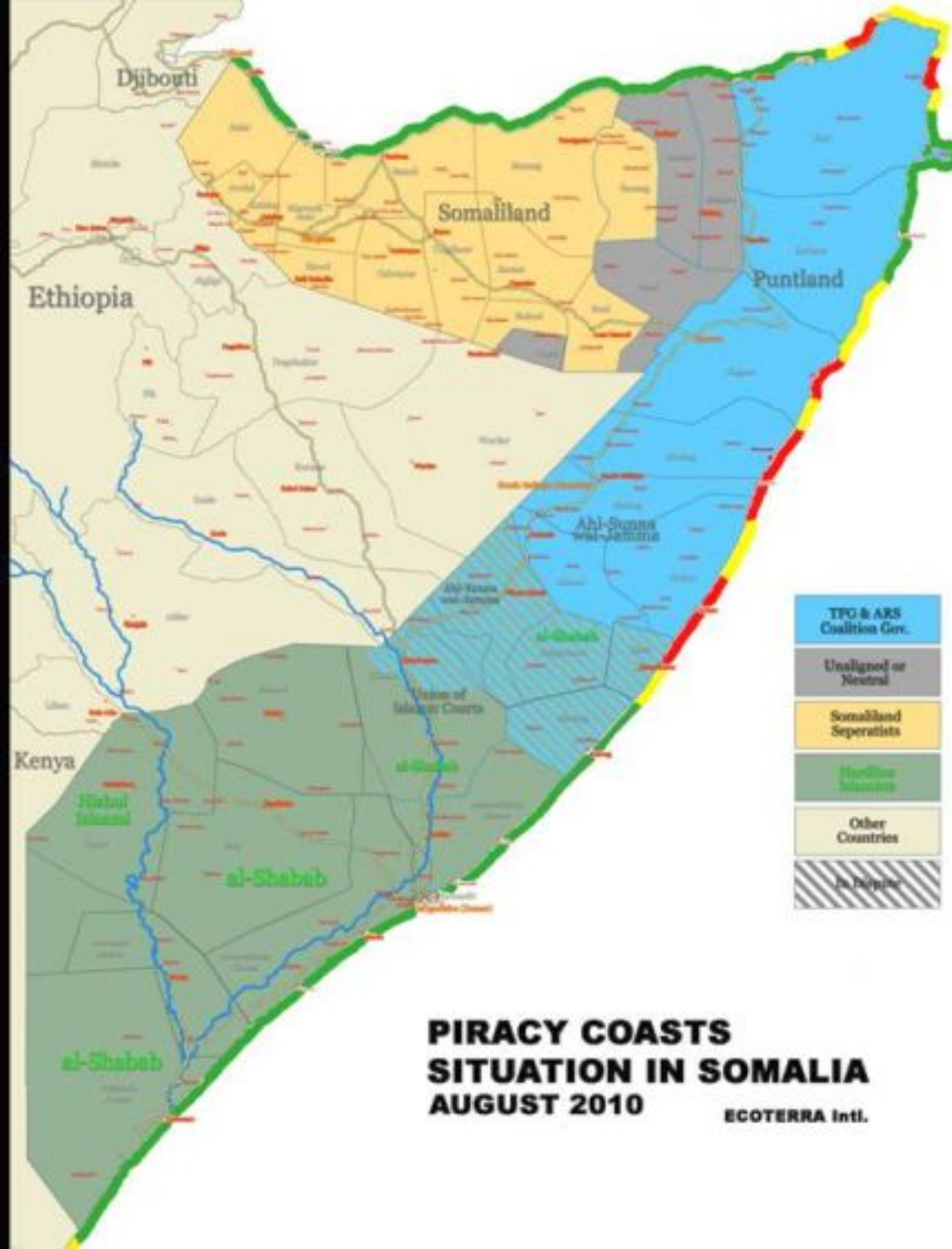
Somalia strategy



Clan-based civil war since 1991; U.S. backed 2006 Ethiopian invasion, attacks on “pirates” and Islamist rebels

“even though there is a new religious overlay to Somalia’s civil war, clan connections still matter and could spell success — or disaster.”

--*New York Times* (3/5/10)



**PIRACY COASTS
SITUATION IN SOMALIA
AUGUST 2010**

ECOTERRA Intl.



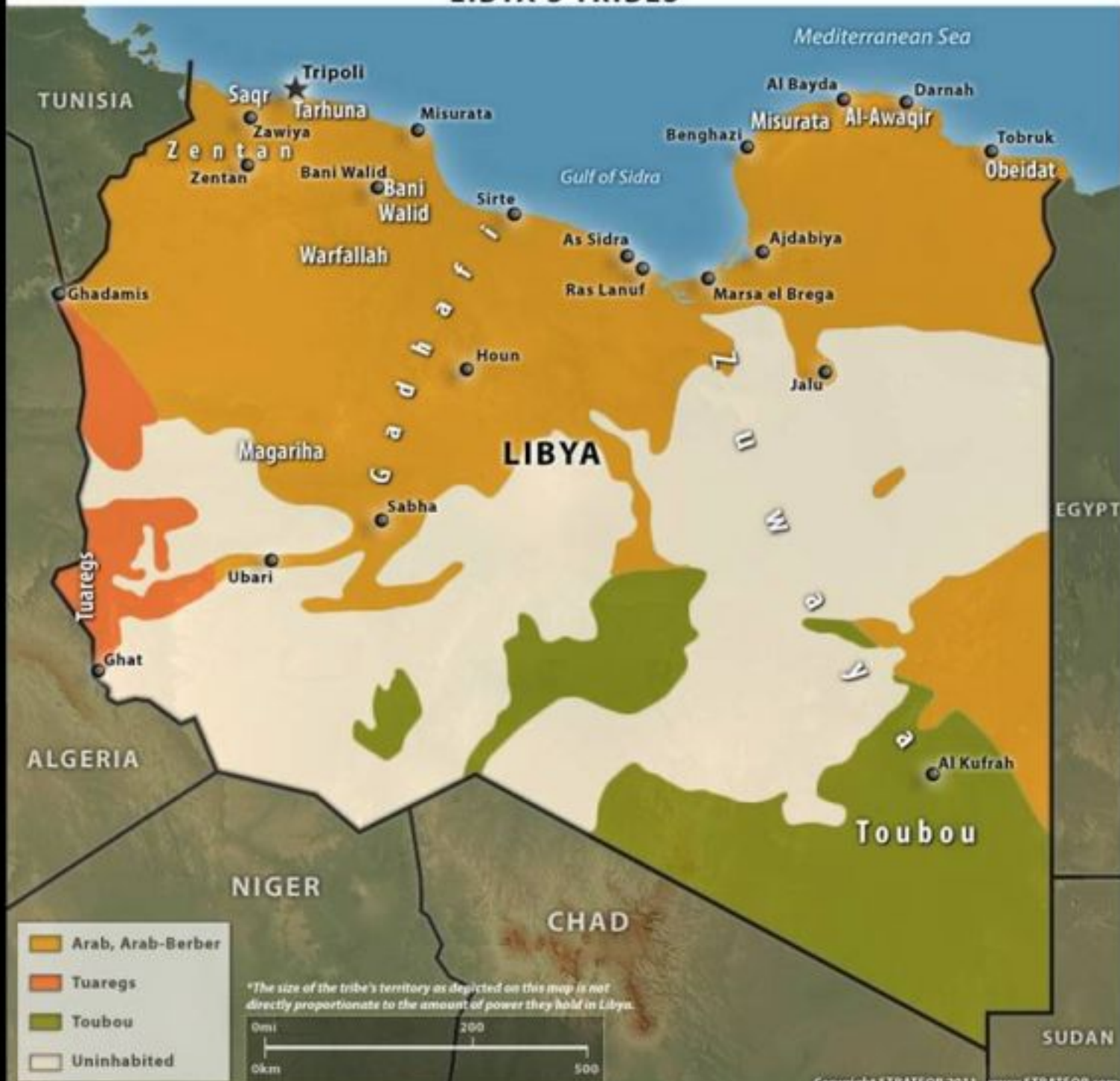
Libya strategy



The Libyan leader, in more than four decades of power, empowered some tribes, weakened others and employed a divide and rule strategy, say Libya experts and tribal leaders. Now, both Col. Gadhafi and his opponents are competing for tribal loyalties to tip the balance in their favor. "Having the tribes on your side means you have the people," said Maj. Gen. Ahmed el-Ghatrani, a defected Libyan army commander now serving the rebel forces."

--*Wall Street Journal* (3/8/11)

LIBYA'S TRIBES



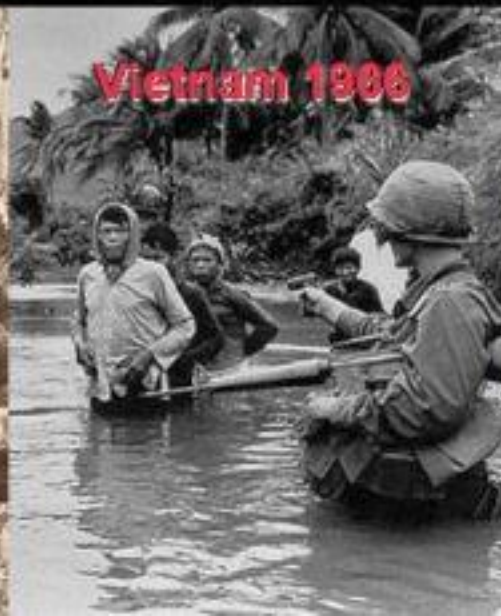
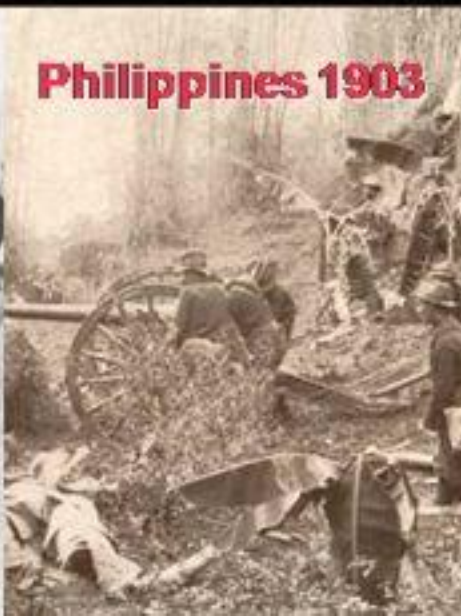
FACING WEST

THE METAPHYSICS OF
INDIAN-HATING
& EMPIRE-BUILDING

RICHARD • DRINNON

Indian Wars as a template for overseas imperialism

- Occupying territory
- Exploiting natural resources
- Undermining sovereign nationhood
- Using ethnic/religious divisions



Judge



"There is an old 'Yank' who lives in a shoe
Covered all over with red, white and blue.
His family is large and still growing bigger—
The result of good work in snapping the trigger." ⁴

Judge, Arkell Publishing Company, New York, August 13, 1898 [artist: 'Zim' Eugene Zimmerman]

Drinnon's "deeper significance of the frontier"

"In each and every West, **place itself was infinitely less important...than what the white settlers brought in their heads and hearts to that particular place.** At each magic margin, their metaphysics of Indian-hating underwent a seemingly confirmatory 'perennial rebirth.'....All along, the obverse of Indian-hating had been the metaphysics of empire-building....**Winning the West amounted to no less than winning the world.**" (pp 463-65)

The Philippines as “Indian Country”

“The presence of troops in the Philippines... has no more to do with militarism and imperialism than had their presence in the Dakotas..before the final outbreaks of the Sioux were ... put down.” -- Theodore Roosevelt (1900)



“The boys go for the enemy as if they were chasing jackrabbits.... Apply the chastening rod...until they come into the reservation and promise to be good ‘Injuns’ ” -- Colonel Funston



Vietnam as “Indian Country”

“Injun fightin’ 1759

Counterinsurgency 1962

-- Sign in Admiral

Harry Feit’s office



U.S. Marines “considered all areas outside their small circular fortresses to be ‘Indian Country’.”

-- *New York Times* (2/28/70)

Iraq as “Indian Country”

“General Richard Neal, briefing reporters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, stated that the U.S. military wanted to be certain of speedy victory once they committed land forces to ‘Indian Country.’”

--Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, 2/27/91





AfPak as “Indian Country”



“I want justice. And there's an old poster out West that says, ‘Wanted: Dead or Alive.’ ”

--George W. Bush (9/17/01)

“Taliban and Al Qaeda figures do hide in remote regions of Pakistan. This is wild country; this is wilder than the Wild West.”

--George W. Bush (2/07)

“Geronimo is EKIA”

(Enemy Killed In Action, 5/1/11)



“NBC’s Chuck Todd informed us...that Osama’s code name for this raid was “Geronimo,” and that the call came in as “Geronimo is KIA” (killed in action) Geronimo was once surrounded by U.S. soldiers in the Robledo Mountains of southwest New Mexico, hidden in a cave from which he seemingly never came out...eerily reminiscent of Bin Laden being similarly trapped in caves in Tora Bora...from which he also escaped.”

“Geronimo is EKIA”
(Enemy Killed In Action, 5/1/11)



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Native Population

Native A



The World as “Indian Country”

“... The American military is back to the days of fighting the Indians. The red Indian metaphor is one with which a liberal policy nomenclatura may be uncomfortable, but Army and Marine field officers have embraced it because it captures perfectly the combat challenge of the early 21st century.... The range of Indian groups, numbering in their hundreds, that the U.S. Cavalry... had to confront was no less varied than that of the warring ethnic and religious militias spread throughout Eurasia, Africa and South America in the early 21st century.”



The World as “Indian Country”

“When the Cavalry invested Indian encampments, they periodically encountered warrior braves beside women and children, much like Fallujah.... Indian Country has been expanding in recent years because of the security vacuum created by the collapse of traditional dictatorships.... Iraq is but a microcosm of the Earth in this regard.”

--Analyst/author Robert D. Kaplan
Wall Street Journal (9/24/04)

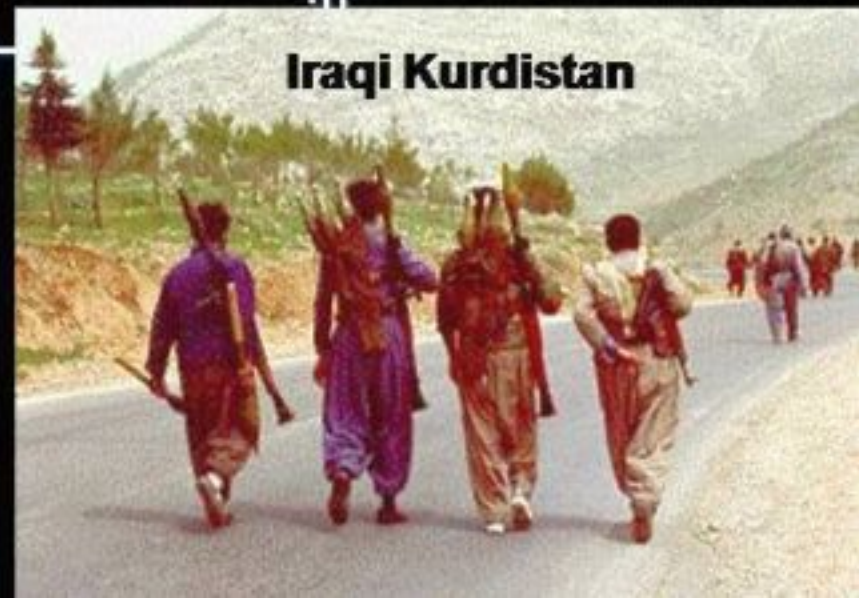
Playing on ethnic/religious divisions

North America: Crow scouts vs. Sioux. *etc.*

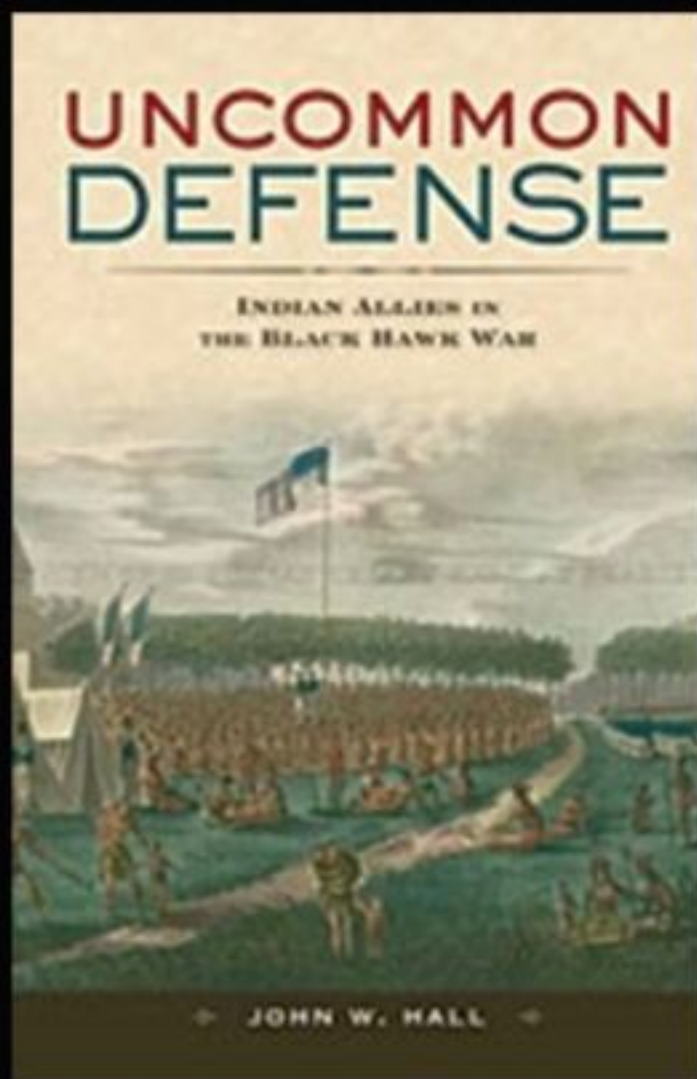
Philippines: Tribal highlanders vs. Filipino rebels

Indochina: Montagnards vs. Viet Cong rebels;
Hmong vs. Pathet L

Iraq: Kurds vs. Arabs;
Shi'ites vs. Sunnis



Playing on ethnic/religious divisions



“John Hall's compelling analysis of the U.S.-Indian diplomacy during the Black Hawk War is instructive as the United States and its allies confront tribal societies in places like Afghanistan and Pakistan while endeavoring to defeat transnational enemies and shape the course of local conflicts that predated our involvement there and are almost certain to continue long after we are gone.”

--Army Brigadier General H.R. McMaster

Redrawing the Middle East map

Ralph Peters



Arundhati Roy on Naxalite rebels in India

“It’s convenient to forget that tribal people in Central India have a history of resistance that predates Mao by centuries. Naxalite politics has been inextricably entwined with tribal uprisings.” --*Outlook India* (3/29/10)

“If you look at Afghanistan, Waziristan...the northeast states of India, the entire thing is a tribal uprising. In Afghanistan, obviously, it’s taken the form of a radical Islamist uprising. And here [in India], it’s a radical left uprising. But the attack is the same. It’s a corporate attack...on these people. The resistance has taken different forms.” --*Democracy Now* 3/22/10



Dattatraya Dantawada. Roy with the Maoists

ESSAY

Walking With The Comrades

Gandhians with a Gun? Arundhati Roy plunges into the sea of Gond people to find some answers...

ARUNDHATI ROY

Arundhati Roy on Naxalite rebels in India

“Resistance is possible in those areas because they have an imagination outside this bar-coded capitalist society that everybody else lives in...that's why there's huge resistance there... a whole bandwidth of resistance that has actually managed for quite a few years now to stall the corporate onslaught.”

-- Seattle Town Hall forum 3/29/10



Dateline Dantewada: Roy with the Maoists

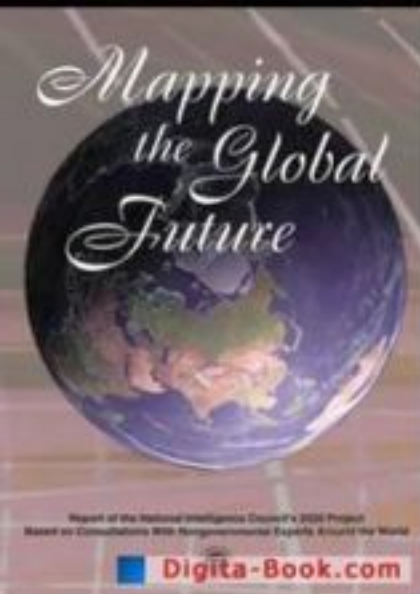
ESSAY

Walking With The Comrades

Gandhians with a Gun? Arundhati Roy plunges into the sea of Gond people to find some answers...

ARUNDHATI ROY

Indigenous movements as new threat in Latin America



“The failure of elites to adapt to the evolving demands of free markets and democracy probably will fuel a revival in populism and drive indigenous movements, which so far have sought change through democratic means, to consider more drastic means”

-- National Intelligence Council, 2005



Insurgencies, Terrorist Groups and Indigenous Movements: An Annotated Bibliography

by Mr. Gerard Gato
Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, KS.



1. Stealing Natural Resources

The rugged, inaccessible terrain that prevented colonial powers from eliminating tribal societies also made accessing minerals, oil, timber more difficult

Acre for acre, more of the resources are now left on tribal lands than on more accessible lands.



1. Stealing Natural Resources



“Up until recently, the tendency in the mass media has been to stereotype native people as fighting a losing battle against the onslaught of industrial civilization. But after two decades of organizing local, national, regional and international alliances, assisted by the Internet, native voices can no longer be ignored in powerful places.”

--Al Gedicks



2. Tribal Social Organization

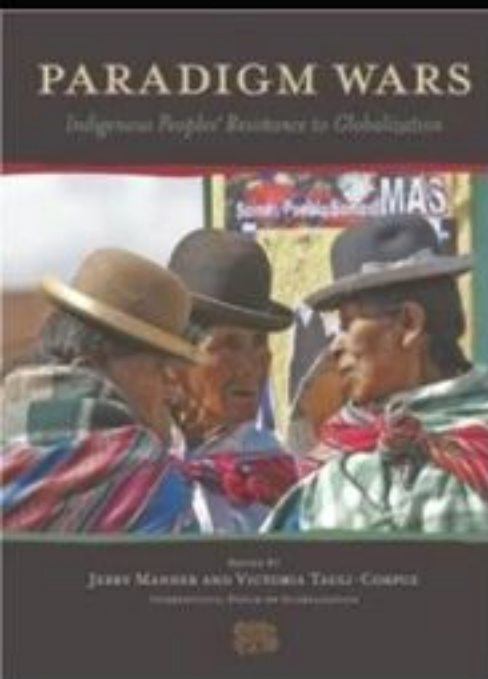
Some Indigenous cultures are socially egalitarian.

Other tribal cultures are not always egalitarian (esp. toward women), but they are *not capitalist*

Neoliberal capitalism cannot stand anything other than Total Control.



2. Tribal Social Organization



“promoters of economic globalization, the neocolonizers, use the overwhelming pressure of homogenization to teach us that indigenous political, economic and cultural systems are obstacles to their ‘progress.’ ”

Indigenous peoples “believe they already constitute a viable alternative to globalization, underpinned by the fundamental values of reciprocity...community solidarity and collectivity.”

--Victoria Tauli-Corpuz,
Chair of UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

3. Tribal Networks of Resistance

Social networks to defend their lands and ways of life—networks of trust anchored in deeply held values that citizens of urban industrial society generally lack.

That is why the “lawless tribal regions” have to be “tamed,” so as not to become a source of resistance to the corporate state.



Use or destroy tribal identities:
The only way for tribal leaders not to be crushed by the counterinsurgency campaign is to accept its aims, its money, its weapons.

3. Tribal Networks of Resistance

“Resistance is possible in those areas because they have an imagination outside this bar-coded capitalist society that everybody else lives in. That’s why there’s huge resistance there... a whole bandwidth of resistance that has actually managed for quite a few years now to stall the corporate onslaught.”

--Arundhati Roy in Seattle (3/29/10)



In the 21st century-- just as many remaining pockets of exploitable resources are located in tribal regions--the only successful pockets of resistance may be found in the mountains, deserts and forests where tribal peoples refuse to die.

