

Caucasus Under Review

Recently published books

*September 2011 – March 2012 **

Abstract

The recently launched books on the Caucasus listed below address a range of topics varying from politics and economics to history. The books offer academic insights on compelling and contested issues relating to the region, such as war; ethnic relations, state sovereignty, transformation, democratization, etc. Recently published, these books seek to fill a gap within their relevant field of inquiries. While they are distinct and independent bodies of research, they have been driven by a common impetus: war and radical transformation in the Caucasus.

* Report prepared by Husrev Tabak, Senior Editor of Caucasus International

Since 2008, the Russo-Georgian war has dominated academic discourse on the region. Accordingly, in his book called *War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze*, Stephen F. Jones surveys the domestic roots of this war. By exploring the role of leadership and public opinion, Jones includes a social dimension in his analysis of the Five Day War. He takes this alternative standpoint further with an analysis of the historical relations between national minorities in the region. Jones moves away from the traditional perspective and depicts an alternative picture - one that has been overwhelmingly ignored by the Western analysts. Nonetheless, he is not alone in discussing war; an edited volume, *Reassessing Security in the South Caucasus* (edited by Annie Jafalian), considers the Five-Day War from the security perspective and investigates its impact on building and maintaining a sustainable security environment throughout the region. The book considers the long-term security and defence requirements in the region in terms of the national interests not only of Russia and Georgia, but also of the other neighbouring countries such as Azerbaijan and Turkey. The book even brings the NATO and EU into the picture and examines their role in building a long-lasting peace in the Caucasus. In tandem with Jafalian's book, Emmanuel Karagianmis's *Energy and Security in the Caucasus* also focuses on war, but

from the viewpoint of the emergence of a conflict of interest among Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Georgia after the war. Karagianmis binds oil politics, pipeline questions, ethnic conflict, and inter-state rivalry together and offers a comprehensive analysis of the current security threats that imperil cooperation between the three regional states. In the same vein, another edited volume, *The South Caucasus 2021: Oil, Democracy and Geopolitics* addresses crucial issues in the region such as territorial conflicts, oil and natural gas resources, geopolitical complexities, pipeline politics, etc. Like Karagianmis, it offers a risk analysis for the near future. Among the featured books, *The South Caucasus 2021* is the most comprehensive and its academic contribution to the literature is likely to be the most significant. This is due to the range of issues it covers along with the diverse background of contributors. As its title implies, similar to previous books, it proposes decade-long trajectories for the future development of the region. At this juncture, as Stephen F. Jones does in his work, questions of democratic development, state-building, and economic development are revisited. The economic standpoint receives greater attention in OECD's *The OECD Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Competitiveness Outlook*, which examines economic possibilities, and ways of developing human capital and enhancing investment opportunities.

Finally, Nadia Diuk's *The Next Generation in Russia, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan* also deals with the issue of democratization in the region, and the role of leaders and youth in shaping the political systems of post-socialist states. This study concludes with an analysis of the sustained pressure on the central governments for political, social, and economic reforms. Recent scholarship on the Caucasus deals with a broad spectrum of issues, with particular emphasis on war, oil, and state-transformation within the region.

Recently Published Books

The South Caucasus 2021: Oil, Democracy and Geopolitics

Eds. Fariz Ismailzade and Glen E. Howard

Jamestown Foundation, January 2010 333 pp.

The South Caucasus 2021: Oil, Democracy and Geopolitics is a recent publication by the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of Republic of Azerbaijan, in partnership with the Jamestown Foundation in Washington, DC. President of the Jamestown Foundation Glen Howard and Executive Vice Rector of Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy Fariz Ismailzade have served as editors for the book.

The South Caucasus 2021: Oil, Democracy and Geopolitics addresses the most vital issues of the region, such as territorial conflicts, oil and natural gas resources, geopolitical complexities, pipeline politics, analysis of the geopolitical risks in the next decades, geopolitics of the Caucasus-Caspian Basin, religion, demographic and migration prospects, and policy direction of the superpowers. The book is essential reading for students and researchers of post-Soviet history and Caucasus studies, sociology, Caspian Sea politics, political science, international relations, as well as for experts in the areas of energy and economics.

Bring together contributions from leading local and foreign experts, this publication aims to assemble the expert views on specific regional issues such as the economic, political and security prospects in the South Caucasus, as well as evaluating the direction of future events in this part of the world.

The Next Generation in Russia, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan

By Nadia M. Diuk, National Endowment for Democracy

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, March 2012, 226 pp.

In the past twenty years, the former Soviet republics have seen plenty of change. There have been revolu-

tions, youth-led protest movements, and other forms of incredible political upheaval. At the center of all of this were young leaders fighting to be heard and clamoring for change. In her meticulously researched and insightful book, *The Next Generation in Russia, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan*, Nadia Diuk shows how those young leaders have risen up and become a part of the new political system. Using unique public opinion polling data together with personal interviews, she explores how this new generation of leaders is shaping the political system and how the young people of today continue to push for reform. This book is important for anyone interested in Eurasian European studies, political transitions, protest movements, or youth and politics.

War and Revolution in the Caucasus: Georgia Ablaze

By Stephen F. Jones, Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts-USA

Routledge, December 2011, 176 pp.

The South Caucasus has traditionally been a playground of contesting empires. This region, on the edge of Europe, is associated in Western minds with ethnic conflict and geopolitical struggles in August 2008. Yet another war broke out in this distant European periphery as Russia and Georgia clashed over the secessionist territory of South Ossetia. The war had

global ramifications culminating in deepening tensions between Russia on the one hand, and Europe and the USA on the other. Speculation on the causes and consequences of the war focused on Great Power rivalries and a new Great Game, on oil pipeline routes, and Russian imperial aspirations. This book takes a different tack, which focuses on the domestic roots of the August 2008 war. Collectively the authors in this volume present a new multidimensional context for the war. They analyse historical relations between national minorities in the region, look at the link between democratic development, state-building, and war, and explore the role of leadership and public opinion. Digging beneath often simplistic geopolitical explanations, the authors give the national minorities and Georgians themselves, the voice that is often forgotten by Western analysts.

Energy and Security in the Caucasus

By Emmanuel Karagiannis, University of Hull

Routledge, December 2011, 248 pp.

Any understanding of the complex politics of the post-Soviet Caucasus presupposes an understanding of the relationship between the transportation of Azerbaijan's oil, inter-state relations and ethnic conflicts. Emmanuel Karagianmis in *Energy and Security in the Caucasus* discusses

oil politics, the pipeline question, ethnic conflicts, and inter-state rivalry and competition among Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey, making a valuable contribution to the debate revolving around the geo-politics of the Caucasus.

The Northwest Caucasus: Past, present, future

By Walter Richmond, Occidental College in Los Angeles-USA

Routledge, November 2011, 2nd Ed., 256 pp.

This is the first book to present a comprehensive history of the Northwest Caucasus. Based on extensive research, it describes the peoples of the Northwest Caucasus, which have a significantly different ethnic makeup and history than the Northeast (Chechnya and Dagestan). The book examines their struggles for survival against repeated invasions and their ultimate defeat at the hands of the Russians. It explores interethnic relations and demographic changes that have occurred in the region over time with a particular focus on the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries, incorporating recently published archival materials concerning the deportation of the Abazas, Circassians and Ubykhs to the Ottoman Empire by the Russians, which is treated as the first act of ethnic cleansing in modern history. The book also closely examines the struggles the Northwest Cauca-

sus peoples continue to undergo in the post-Soviet era, facing pressures from organized crime, religious extremism, and a federal government that is unresponsive to their needs. It emphasizes the strategic importance of the region, lying on the northeastern shore of the Black Sea directly on the border between the “Christian” and “Muslim” worlds. Overall, it will be of interest to scholars of Russian history and politics, Caucasus and Central Asian Studies, genocide studies, international relations and conflict studies.

Reassessing Security in the South Caucasus

Edited By Annie Jafalian, Université Jean Moulin - CLESID, France

Ashgate, November 2011, 258 pp.

This volume reassesses security in the South Caucasus, locating the region within the neighbouring zones of Europe, Russia, Turkey and Iran, and highlighting US interests in the area. Thus the edited volume provides an updated analysis on security interests, perceptions and policies at national, regional and international levels through cross-national studies. Aimed at highlighting long-term defence and security trends in the region, contributors re-examine their relevance and enduring impact. They identify changing dynamics under recent geopolitical and political developments in and around the region

such as the enlargements of NATO, the August 2008 Russia-Georgia war, the creation of the EU Eastern Partnership, and presidential elections. Chapters have been written by experts from inside and around the region, i.e. Armenia, Georgia, Russia and Turkey, with other important contributions provided by regional experts from France and Canada. Students and scholars of post-Soviet states, Eurasian geopolitics and European Security will find this volume enlightening.

Competitiveness and private sector development: Eastern Europe and South Caucasus

By Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

OECD, October 2011, 231 pp.

With a total population of over 75 million people and a strategic location between wealthy trading partners, with Russia to the east and a vast market of EU citizens to the west, the Eastern Europe and South Caucasus (EESC) region is attractive as a destination for investment and trade. It is endowed with significant human and resources ranging from the black soil in Ukraine that produces some of the best wheat in the world, to energy reserves in Azerbaijan and unexplored water resources in several countries. However, in spite of recent growth – an average of almost 8% of GDP during 1998-2008 – the region's

productivity levels remain 77% below the world average. *The OECD Eastern Europe and South Caucasus Competitiveness Outlook* examines the key policies that would increase competitiveness in the countries of the region through developing human capital, improving access to finance for SMEs and creating more and better investment opportunities.