

# CAUCASUS UNDER REVIEW

## RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOKS

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While the Caucasus is a region of enormous diversity and potential, it is also a region about which relatively little is known. However, during the last decade, numerous publications on the region have expanded both regional and international understanding of this diversity and potential. This overview of recent publications provides an up-to-date reading list for anyone interested in the region. This issue presents recently published books which delve into a range of issues, from the Cold War to new geopolitics; Russian geopolitics to the Sasanian Empire; the Cultural Revolution to new media; from Azerbaijan's foreign policy and the EU's role in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to East-West transportation corridor.



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The book *Gender in Georgia: Feminist perspectives on culture, nation and history in South Caucasus* is edited by **Maia Barkaia**, an international PhD in gender studies from Tbilisi State University, and **Alisse Waterston**, Presidential Scholar and Professor of Anthropology at John Jay College, City University of New York. At its core, the volume provides the first ever woman-centered collection of research and analysis on Georgia. It brings together a group of Georgian and international feminist scholars and activists to explore the political, economic, social, and cultural conditions that have shaped gender dynamics in Georgia from the late nineteenth century to the present. Offering a feminist critique of power in its many manifestations, this book assesses women's political agency in Georgia and reclaims a history that is in the process of being written. The project enables the volume's contributors to deconstruct and challenge the grand narratives on gender in Georgia that have been—or continue to be—nurtured by proponents of deeply entrenched, sometimes unyielding, ideologies. Altogether, this collaborative endeavor is a project of knowledge production and dissemination that affirms the value of gender studies as a significant area of engaged scholarship. It also provides information on and insight into the instrumentality and complexity of gender roles in a nation that, historically, has been embedded in “East–West,” “metropole–periphery” and “Soviet–post-Soviet” tensions.

The book *Tug of War: Negotiating Security in Eurasia* is issued by the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), and jointly edited by Mikhail Troitskiy (dean of the School of Government and International Affairs at Moscow State Institute of International Affairs) and Fen Osler Hampson (director of CIGI's Global Security & Politics Program). The volume brings together conflict and security experts from Russia, Eurasia, and the West to tackle the overarching question: How useful has the process of negotiation been in resolving or mitigating different conflicts and coordination problems in Eurasia, compared to attempts at exploiting or achieving a decisive advantage over one's opponents? Eurasia, in the book, is understood as the vast geographic space stretching from the western borders of the former Soviet Union to

East Asia and encompassing the sub-regions of Eastern Europe, South Caucasus, as well as Central, South, and North-East Asia. Rather than focusing on one conflict in isolation, *Tug of War* zooms out to look to the entire political web of the whole region in a way that no other book covering this topic has done before. The 238-page volume also includes a chapter on “Negotiating Conflicts in the South Caucasus” by Jason Bruder and Shannon Burke Bruder that addresses the “intractable conflict over contested territories in Nagorno Karabakh.”

The book *Religion and Soft Power in the South Caucasus* is edited by **Ansgar Jödicke**, senior lecturer in the Department of Social Sciences, University of Fribourg, Switzerland. By exploring the role of religion in transnational relations between Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and their surrounding neighbors Russia, Turkey, Iran, and the EU, this volume describes and helps explain how transnational religious relationships intermingle with transnational political relationships in the South Caucasus. The concept of soft power is the heuristic starting point of this important investigation to define the importance of religion in the region. Drawing on a three-year project supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation, the book brings together academics from the South Caucasus and across Europe to offer original empirical research and contributions from experienced researchers from political science, history, and oriental studies. This volume helps us understand the vastly different political trajectories taken by the three South Caucasian states since independence. Written with theoretical sophistication, it adds important insights into how soft power is conceived and used by the South Caucasian governments, by their regional neighbors, and by the religious organizations themselves.

While talking about the role of religion in the South Caucasus, **Bayram Balci’s** book *Islam in Central Asia and the Caucasus since the Fall of the Soviet Union* also deserves special attention. With the end of the Soviet Union in 1991, a major turning point for all former Soviet republics, Central Asian and Caucasian countries began to reflect on their histories and identities. As a consequence of their opening up to the global exchange of ideas, various strains of Islam and trends in Islamic thought have nourished the Islamic revival that had already started in the

context of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. These influences originate from Turkey, Iran, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Indian subcontinent—the four regions with strong ties to Central Asian and Caucasian Islam in the years before Soviet occupation. Bayram Balci seeks to analyze how these new Islamic influences have reached local societies and how they have interacted with pre-existing religious belief and practice. Combining exceptional erudition with rare first-hand research, Balci's book provides a sophisticated account of both the internal dynamics and external influences in the evolution of Islam in the region.

**Mehran Kamrava's** book, *The Great Game in West Asia*, examines the strategic competition between Turkey and Iran for power and influence in the South Caucasus. Contemporary West Asia is typically portrayed as a region of fragility, plagued by lingering interstate conflict, ridden with the fallout from unresolved territorial disputes, and unsettled by the persistence of ethnic and religious identities that do not easily align with the creation of strong nation-states. As middle powers with regional aspirations, Iran and Turkey see the South Caucasus region as an ideal arena for expanding their reach and influence. As post-sanctions Iran finds greater space for diplomacy and trade, the ensuing competition between the two neighboring countries is likely to intensify in the coming years. Kamrava has put together an outstanding group of scholars to explain the key drivers shaping this strategically sensitive region. The 11 short articles in this volume explore topics such as: the competing interests between Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkey, and other actors in the South Caucasus region; the exercising of soft power by Turkey and Russia in the area; and the state-building struggles of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Overall, the book can be considered as a highly insightful account of important trends that are impacting West Asia.

**Licinia Simão**, assistant professor in International Relations at the University of Coimbra and senior researcher at the Centre for Social Studies in Portugal, argues, in her book *The EU's Neighborhood Policy Towards the South Caucasus*, that the nature of the political and security community the EU wants to develop in its eastern neighborhood has profound internal contradictions, with identity issues resting at their core. Using

a constructivist-inspired take, this book first considers how the EU has expanded its security community and then updates it to the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) institutional context, where integration is either not offered or not desired. Empirically rich and conceptually refreshing, it sheds light on the differing geostrategic aspirations of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, and corresponding conflict dynamics in a highly volatile region. By addressing the interaction and power of competing regional ordering mechanisms, and by systematically identifying contradictions in the ENP's conceptualization of regional security, it demonstrates lucidly the difficulties the EU faces in its ambition to expand notions of a European security community beyond its borders. The book will appeal to both scholars and practitioners interested in European security, European Union external action, and the post-Soviet space.

In his new book *The Experiment: Georgia's Forgotten Revolution, 1918-1921*, the journalist and historian Eric Lee does two things. First, he tells the little-known and complicated story of the Georgian Revolution and the short-lived first independent Georgian Republic that it created. Second, Lee uses the Georgian experience of those years to argue for the superiority of its Menshevik Social Democratic government over the Bolshevik or, later, Communist government of Soviet Russia. Lee argues that the Georgian Menshevik government was more democratic and therefore more genuinely socialist than the Communist government of Russia. Along the way, Lee introduces us to a remarkable set of ideas and policies, among them a vision of socialism that featured universal suffrage, a people's militia in place of a standing army, and a civil society grounded in trade unions and cooperatives. Though the Georgian Democratic Republic lasted for just three years before it was brutally crushed on the orders of Stalin, in that short time it was able to offer a glimpse of a more humane alternative to the Communist nightmare that was to come. *The Experiment* is the first authoritative English-language history of this forgotten episode of yesterday and it will appeal to those interested in Soviet history as well as those seeking inspiration for a democratic socialist alternative today.

The book *Azerbaijan–Iran Cooperation: Main Directions and*

*Opportunities* published by the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SAM) and edited by **Javid Veliyev** and **Mesiagha Mehemmedi** covers the articles authored by SAM's research fellows on the main directions and potential of Azerbaijan–Iran cooperation. This highly effective book on bilateral relations provides cutting-edge knowledge on the current status of and prospects for mutual political relations and Azerbaijan–Iran cooperation in the contexts of regional security and trilateral (multidimensional) formats. The newly-published book also examines the current state of relations and perspectives in the fields of economy/trade, transport, transit, energy, culture, and tourism, as well as partnership directions in the Caspian Sea.

The product of a joint research project conducted by the Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI) and the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SAM), the volume *Cooperation in Eurasia: Linking Identity, Security, and Development* edited by **Carlo Frappi** and **Gulshan Pashayeva** aims to shed light on the drivers for and rationale behind regional cooperation in Eurasia. In particular, it investigates and ponders the significance of identity issues, security perceptions, and economic development needs for interstate cooperation in the Eurasian context, in the process taking into account both supra-national frameworks and regional scenarios. Accordingly, the book is divided into two parts, focusing, respectively, on “Cooperation and Competition at Multilateral Level” and on “Regional Case Studies.”

## **Gender in Georgia: Feminist Perspectives on Culture, Nation and History in South Caucasus**

*Edited by Maia Barkaia and Alisse Waterston*

There are few scholarly works published in gender studies from post-Soviet countries, particularly those in Central Asia and the South Caucasus. This volume helps fill that gap, offering voices from feminist academics and activists, the majority of whom are Georgian scholars specializing in gender studies who helped establish the discipline at Tbilisi State University. Their chapters are complemented by contributions from international feminist scholars who have worked in Georgia.

As a post-Soviet state, Georgia's struggles are in some ways emblematic of those of other post-Soviet states and knowing how gender fits into the country's turbulent history and how gender is performed, reinforced, and interpreted has broad implications for understanding larger regional processes and dynamics. The country, according to the book, is at a critical juncture, still in the process of reinventing itself as a nation-state in what is a long post-Soviet "transition," and the ongoing transformation is "gendered." This volume treats gender as social construct, personal and social experience, political focal point, and analytic category in relation to the social forces of class, religion, and local and global political economy. "Gender," broadly speaking, is the lightning rod issue in Georgia around which controversy swirls and contradictions are revealed, and contemporary debates on women's rights, gender relations, and sexuality must be understood in terms of contingent history—a past that is worth recounting because it informs the present.

The book consists of three major parts. While part I on "Power and Politics" provides an important historical perspective and theoretical grounding essential for the issues raised throughout the volume by tracing developments relevant to women's rights and gender relations in Georgia between the second half of the nineteenth century and the present, the second part on "Violence" concentrates on the social problem of domestic violence and the violence of displacement, dispossession, and war. The five chapters of Part III, on "Identities, Representations and Resistance," in turn, attempt to question "tradition" from a number of vantage points. Taken as a whole, this work

demonstrates the value of foregrounding gender in this way in order to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of Georgian culture, nation, and history.

### **Tug of War: Negotiating Security in Eurasia**

*Edited by Mikhail Troitskiy and Fen Osler Hampson*

Conflicts in Eurasia have been receiving significant attention in the last few years from political scientists and international relations scholars. The geographic area of Eurasia lies at the intersection of global and regional conflicts and coordination games. On the one hand, regional controversies in Eurasia often affect relations among the great powers on a global scale. On the other hand, global rivalries can either exacerbate tensions or facilitate negotiated solutions across Eurasia, mostly as a result of competitive behavior among major powers in conflict mediation. Few scholars have focused on the negotiation process or brought together the whole variety of seemingly disparate yet comparable cases. This volume, edited by two global security experts—one from Canada and one from Russia—examines negotiations that continue after the “hot phase” of a conflict has ended and the focus becomes the search for a lasting security solution.

“Negotiating security” is conceptually broader than the meaning of negotiations aimed at resolving a “hot” conflict where (as illustrated in the second part of the book through examples spanning from Moldova, to Ukraine, to the South Caucasus) violence is widespread and there is major loss of life. Indeed, the first part of the volume also examines interstate negotiations in less antagonistic settings where longer-term issues of political and economic engagement, as opposed to negotiating ceasefires or redrawing state boundaries, are discussed. The last part of the contributions, meanwhile, deals with another class of negotiations that can be characterized as preventive diplomacy or conflict management. This is where a conflict that is not “hot” nonetheless features simmering controversies over borders (none of the Central Asian countries have fully demarcated their borders), arms races, territorial expansion, or even trade disputes that reverberate throughout the region. Overall, *Tug of War* offers a timely, coherent set of dispassionate, well-informed essays that



together shed valuable light on the complex circumstances, track record, and prospects of negotiated solutions—and the many deep pitfalls in their paths.

## **Religion and Soft Power in the South Caucasus**

*Edited by Ansgar Jödicke*

Representing the end result of a three-year research project financed by the Swiss National Foundation, this collection proposes a fresh perspective, using the South Caucasus as a rich deposit of case studies, on the very popular issue of soft power from the unusual angle of religion. It comprises original empirical research by younger scholars as well as contributions from experienced researchers from political science, history, and oriental studies. The researchers come from the Caucasus region as well as from Estonia.

There is growing international interest in the Caucasus region as an area where powerful neighboring states (Iran, Turkey, Russia) negotiate their future policies and spheres of influence, and this book continues and modifies the ongoing theoretical discussion on “soft power and religion” by scrutinizing the use of religion as a soft power instrument of states. The volume also outlines how, despite close geographical interlacement, common historical memories, and similar inherited structures, the three countries of the South Caucasus have gone through different trajectories of development and how, from the comparative perspective, factors such as religion, historical traditions, national consciousness, and political culture have interacted throughout this process.

While enough has been written on Iranian soft power in Iraq and elsewhere, not much has been written on Tehran’s soft power in the South Caucasus states, and this book makes a significant contribution by filling this academic gap. Special attention is drawn to the question of religious transnationalism, which is analyzed from two perspectives: religious transnationalism as, first, a direct geopolitical factor and, second, as a politically ambivalent element of religious ideology. The first of these, religiously based geopolitics, is considered as a state policy with the intention to influence a neighboring state’s population. The second form of transnationalism, as an element of religious

ideology, is a typical element in many religious traditions, and this transnational reference does not necessarily compete with national integration. While the first form of transnationalism entails a national security problem, the second form demands an adequate domestic religious policy. Taken as a whole, this is an intelligent book written by scholars who understand the complexities of the South Caucasus and an important contribution to the field, helping to explain why religion remains such a vital part of modern political life.

### **Islam in Central Asia and the Caucasus since the Fall of the Soviet Union**

*By Bayram Balci*

Subject to the gaze of Moscow and the close control of the religious sphere throughout the Soviet period, Central Asian and Caucasian societies have long lived in isolation from the rest of the Muslim world. The end of the USSR, in 1991, came to break this confinement. It coincided with the introduction of the new states of Central Asia and the Caucasus to the phenomenon of religious globalization. The long-term study of Central Asian and Caucasian Islam, as well as the influence of Turkey, Iran, India, and Saudi Arabia on religious phenomena in this region, is the ambition of this rich study that applies historical method in connection to the most pressing contemporary issues of our globalized world.

Such religious revivals are analyzed in terms of their main components and their local sources, but in the light of external influences and multiform interactions that link the two phenomena. The author touches upon a vast array of issues, ranging from increasing Salafi tendencies among Georgia's Kist population, to the Indian subcontinent's often overlooked contribution to the Islamic revival through the work of the Jamaat al Tabligh, the most transnational Islamic movement in the world, before ultimately providing crucial analytical conclusions. For instance, raising the issue of Turkish influence in the region, Balci asserts that Turkey's greatest influence among the Turkic populations of the post-Soviet world derives not from their common ethno-linguistic roots, but from the success of Turkey's religious outreach. The contributions of

other conventional external religious players such as Iran and Saudi Arabia to the religious evolution of local societies are also appropriately addressed in this volume.

These are topics tackled by Bayram Balci, a researcher at CERI Sciences Po, Paris, and a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC, throughout this vast overview. At a time when Islam, more divided than ever, provokes controversy and misunderstanding, Bayram Balci invites us to reconsider the influence of this religion by studying its recent development in the confines of Central Asia and the Caucasus. This is a major publication at the crossroads of history, anthropology, and political science.

### **The Great Game in West Asia**

*Edited by Mehran Kamrava*

Within the context of the competition between Russia and the West currently occurring in Ukraine, the three countries of the South Caucasus—Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia—suddenly matter a great deal to a variety of external actors, both in the neighborhood and farther afield. Bordering Turkey, south of Russia, and north of Iran, the South Caucasus has historically served as a locus of great power competition and, in the current climate of regional and international affairs, its geostrategic relevance has been reinvigorated. In addition, the region is receiving extensive external attention due to its access to energy resources, and particularly to its crucial role in existing and planned pipelines that provide gas to Europe and elsewhere. Thus, the regional rivalry between Iran and Turkey, reinvigorated since the mid-1990s, makes a useful lens through which to examine the diverse trajectories of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. In this regard, Mehran Kamrava, a professor and Director of the Center for International and Regional Studies (CIRS) at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Qatar, has edited a set of illuminating and highly innovative essays on a topic that has received scant academic attention.

Different chapters of the book elaborate on two major factors that created opportunities for Iran and Turkey to compete for influence in the South Caucasus. Firstly, absence of a unified

strategic vision for the region from great powers such as the USA, European Union, and, by the mid-1990s, Russia, created a somewhat permissive regional context—a space that enabled Iran and Turkey to actively court the emerging republics to align with them and to try to expand the different dimensions of their influence over the newly-independent states. Another factor was the predicament of the three young republics themselves. As brand new states, the South Caucasus republics had to constitute themselves from scratch. They had to create institutions of governance and instruments of power, forge national identities that sustained and reinforced their sovereignty and independence, establish economies that were networked internally and functioned without dependence on what were now other sovereign states, and they had to navigate their international relations in the ominous shadows of both a giant former overlord and smaller, but no less ambitious, middle powers nearby. This research initiative, launched by CIRS, delivers an outstanding compendium that provides further insight into those complex relationships and connections between the aforementioned states of West Asia in geographical, political, and socio-cultural terms.

### **The EU's Neighborhood Policy Towards the South Caucasus**

*By Licinia Simão*

This book offers a comprehensive and insightful historical analysis of the EU's security policies towards the three countries of the South Caucasus—Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan—and the breakaway territories of Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. Licinia Simão builds here upon the concept of an enlargement of the security community to explore why, how, and with what degree of success the EU has engaged and developed positive forms of integration with this region. The “security community expansion” concept does not appear in any of the EU's policy documents on the South Caucasus, but it does help give us a better understanding of its policies—in particular the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Simão's research is inspired by the constructivist tradition, and she therefore looks at the roles of ideas, norms, and practices in shaping policies and identities.

Combining scholarly and practitioner insights with a host of interviews, conducted during her extensive stays in all three states of the South Caucasus and in Brussels, with the representatives of all the actors that have been involved in the formulation of the ENP, Simão captures with precision the unfolding contradictions between the European Union's vision of itself as a security community and its uncertain fit with South Caucasian security concerns. In order to understand these different security concerns, this book looks in more detail at the security challenges of the South Caucasus, separately analyzing each of the regional states and also covering the secessionist or irredentist conflicts they are involved in. Simão points out how, for all three countries, the policy instruments put in place by the EU are too weak to overcome manifestations of regional divisions such as open confrontation, closed borders, and the lack of infrastructural projects that bedevil all the countries in the region.

According to the author, rather than regarding neighboring societies and their “flawed” political and economic systems as a threat to Europe, the members of the European security community need to become more responsive to the security challenges these societies face, as these also affect the EU and its members. This could certainly go a long way towards portraying the European security community as genuinely interested in its partners in the post-Soviet space, as well as helping to make EU and other Pan-European institutions' policies more effective in assuring regional security and peace. All in all, Licinia Simão's book offers a welcome and timely contribution to our understanding of the European Neighbourhood Policy towards the South Caucasus.

### **The Experiment: Georgia's Forgotten Revolution, 1918-1921**

*By Eric Lee*

For many, the Russian Revolution of 1917 was a symbol of hope and offered proof that another way of envisioning the world was indeed possible. But Soviet authoritarianism and the horrors of the gulags have since led to the revolution becoming synonymous with oppression, forever tainting socialism in the eyes of its critics. Meanwhile, the often overlooked experience of Georgia,

which declared its independence from Russia in 1918, tells a different story. In *The Experiment*, Eric Lee explores the little-known saga of the country's experiment in democratic socialism, detailing the epic, turbulent events of this forgotten chapter in revolutionary history. Though the Georgian Democratic Republic lasted for just three years before it was brutally crushed on the orders of Stalin, the author emphasizes that even in that short time it was able to offer a glimpse of a more humane alternative to the Communist nightmare that was to come.

Eric Lee is a London-based journalist and historian who has spent over thirty years researching independent Georgia, and has himself been active in trade union and political struggles in both the U.S. and UK. Thus, he does not shy away from painting a sympathetic portrait of Georgia's experiment with democratic socialism. Lee states that the Georgian Mensheviks led by Noe Zhordania were both Marxists and democrats. They created a multi-party, pluralist democracy with free elections—including women's suffrage—while at the same time carrying out radical land reform, strengthening the cooperative movement, and encouraging the growth of independent trade unions with the right to strike. The Georgian Republic, according to the author, had universal significance and, as the world marks the centenary of the Russian Revolution, this is a good time to bring this almost unknown story out of the shadows, giving it its proper place in the historiography of socialism. By placing the Georgian experiment in its historical and international context—on the eve of Georgia's celebration of the 100th anniversary of their declaration of independence—this book gives us important insights into the nature of nation building, socialism, Stalinism, and even contemporary Russia.

### **Azerbaijan–Iran Cooperation: Main Directions and Opportunities**

*Edited by Javid Veliyev and Mesiagha Mehemmedi*

Azerbaijani–Iranian economic and trade relations have followed a growth trend over the past four years. Trade turnover has increased tremendously between the two neighboring countries, and the volume of reciprocal investments and the number of joint production facilities have apparently also increased. Meanwhile,

the expanded level of partnership in the transport and transit sectors has yielded positive outcomes, and further construction of the North–South transport corridor will raise not only mutual ties per se; the project will completely shift regional cooperation to a new level.

Over the years, a wide spectrum of favorable opportunities have been realized to enable the execution of joint activities in the disputed Caspian Sea, and significant progress has been made in transforming the Caspian Sea into a zone of peace, cooperation, and security. A great number of positive opportunities have also materialized for further expansion of cooperation in oil and gas, and the energy sector generally.

Besides the remarkable nuances, broadening cultural and humanitarian ties are also playing a vital role in the growth of Azerbaijan–Iran interstate relations, and this pattern of achievements is advancing every year. Moreover, progressive tourism relations are interpreted as a promising factor in Azerbaijan–Iran collaboration. The release of this book not only thoroughly covers these topics, but also provides suggestions and recommendations for further cooperation between the two countries.

### **Cooperation in Eurasia: Linking Identity, Security, and Development**

*Edited by Carlo Frappi and Gulshan Pashayeva*

Since the end of the Cold War, the international system has gone through major changes, marked by increasing fragmentation into highly differentiated—yet interconnected—regional and sub-regional arenas. However, neither the protagonists of “the end of the history,” nor those insisting on the preservation of stark power dynamics during the post-Cold War period, have managed to provide a viable explanation for this path of development. This volume, in response, delves into investigating the drivers and the rationale behind regional cooperation in Eurasia. It aims in particular at analyzing the nexus between identity, security, and development in the post-bipolar Eurasian landmass, focusing on multilateral organizations and regional complexes. Accordingly, the book has been divided into two parts, focusing respectively

on “Cooperation and Competition at the Multilateral Level” and on “Regional Case Studies.”

While assessing the role of ideational factors such as identities and values in achieving either cooperation or competition in international politics, this work also focuses on more traditional economic and security issues, for example, trade, infrastructure, border protection, and ethno-territorial conflicts, and elaborates on their particular contribution towards the actors’ behavior and overall political culture. The six chapters presented in this volume offer a wide and in-depth look at the security and development dynamics in the wider Eurasian region through the lenses provided by identity and Regional Security Complexes. These distinctive dynamics, in turn, do not appear isolated and are better understood as part of a wider change in the international system, which seems to have shifted its direction from the globalized liberal order towards one emphasizing the relative importance of regional context(s) at the normative level. All in all, this volume aims to contribute to the debate concerning regionalization and area studies, while providing political and economic national decision makers with insights and inputs on the evolving dynamics shaping the Eurasian region.

Reviewed by **Polad MURADLI**