

DESCnet

Jean Monnet Network DESCnet
Developing European Studies in the Caucasus
Newsletter 1/2017

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1 – Editorial

Dear colleagues and friends!

Given the comprehensive nature of the undertaking within the framework laid down by the DESCnet and the AESC, it seemed to be a daunting task for me when I was asked by Professor Thomas Kruessmann to prepare the editorial for the fifth issue of the DESCnet Newsletter. Going through the previous issues, I came across highly valuable information on upcoming events, news, opinions, and new publications. The Newsletter has in my experience been of immense assistance in familiarising newcomers like myself with the objectives, the achievements, and the serious scholarship displayed in the context of DESCnet and the AESC. The diversification and consolidation of the activities of the Consortium and the Association over time, along with the emphasis on openness and inclusiveness, constitute what I regard as the most fulfilling aspects of the endeavour. From the summer and winter schools to increasing amounts of scholarly publications or seminars, the network's support for students and young researchers of the Caucasus region seems to have given a boost to scholarly exchange at all levels. The project has also managed to re-invent itself through initiatives such as the debate on the working paper series.

The participation of Yeditepe University in this endeavour carries particular relevance and importance, owing to the need to re-invigorate students' interest in European Union (EU) studies. As attention to developments in the EU waxes and wanes insofar as the public discussions and media coverage in Turkey are concerned, the interest on the topic among the undergraduate and graduate students continues unabated. Within this framework of rewarding collaboration offered by DESCnet and the AESC, plenty of opportunities await the students and the colleagues in Turkey and the broader Caucasus region.

With the extensive support extended by the Rectorate at Yeditepe University, Professor Haluk Kabaalioğlu has been the pioneering figure in our institution's participation in the

project and always stepped in with a tireless and inspiring encouragement. I consider this opportunity he presented as one of the numerous contributions he has made to young scholars' personal and professional development. Okan Yağcı and Adem Yaşar who assisted Professor Kabaalioğlu in enhancing our institution's role in the Consortium also merit particular mention.

On behalf my colleagues and our students, I also feel obliged to thank Professor Thomas Kruessmann for welcoming and orienting us. While I personally feel privileged to take part, it is with great pleasure that we take up this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment and determination to furthering the objectives of the network and all that it set out to achieve.

Based on such priorities, we derive the utmost pleasure from the fact that we were able to host the First Annual Convention of the AESC on 27/28 April. With the support of the Dean's Office in the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences and the Department of Political Science and International Relations, the preparations for the Convention went extremely well. The members of faculty and the International Relations Students' Club worked enthusiastically to ensure a supportive and stimulating environment during the panels and the leisure time. We have heard great scholarship and lively discussions. In looking back, we hope that the event will energize further capacity building on the part of our partnership.

Yours sincerely,

Ebru İter Akarçay
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Economics and
Administrative Sciences
Yeditepe University



2 – Upcoming DESCnet events

First Annual Convention of the Association of European Studies for the Caucasus „Challenges and Opportunities for Europeanisation in the Caucasus” Yeditepe University (Istanbul, Turkey) 27-28 April 2017

As mentioned in the Editorial to this Newsletter, the AESC will hold its first Annual Convention on 27-28 April 2017 in Istanbul. Apart from placing the call among DESCnet consortium universities in the Caucasus region, the organisers at Yeditepe University, under the guidance of Prof. Ebru İlter Akarçay, have reached out to 76 different institutions inside of Turkey, 72 of which being departments or research centres affiliated with public and foundation universities. Of the 30 research centres contacted, 22 specialise in European Studies and 2 on the Caucasus region. Following the solicitation of interest in the previous Newsletter, one central contribution from DESCnet consortium members will be a workshop on studying institutions and practices of regional integration that have been formed at Europe's margins, more specifically the Black Sea region, the Caspian Sea region, the Intermarium concept, the Union for Mediterranean, the Visegrad group, the Baltic and Nordic regions, as well as some other interesting cases of region-building in the world, e.g. Global North or South as well as the Hemispheres of the Earth. The extant literature on each of them basically deals with individual regions and lacks a cross-regional comparative perspective. Besides, the most recent developments (identity crisis within the EU, the growing securitisation momentum in regional agendas, the EU-Russia conflict) pose a number of new questions: How do regional institutions react to the growing insecurity? What happens with forms of regional integration within the premises of the EU or under its direct patronage? This set of topics can be researched from a variety of perspectives – cultural studies, sociology of international relations, political economy, legal studies, etc.

It is planned to use the workshop presentations for launching a special issue of an international peer-reviewed journal. Apart from workshop participants, other colleagues interested in contributing to the topic may be included. Those interested in either of these two possibilities please contact Mukhtar Hajizada (hajizada@gmail.com) and/or Andrey Makarychev (andrey.makarychev@ut.ee).

For young researchers, there will be a limited number of free accommodation options on-campus at Yeditepe University. Please contact the local organiser Prof. Ebru İlter Arkacay (eiakarcay@yeditepe.edu.tr), if you would like to take advantage of this option. For all other participants, there is a range of hotels recommended by the organisers. The hotels are in reasonable proximity to the Yeditepe Campus. Rates for one night/single range from € 55 – 70. Accommodation is offered at:

- Silence İstanbul
- Ataşehir Sheraton
- Bostancı Dedeman
- Kozyatağı Hilton

In parallel to the AESC Convention, on 28 April at 5 p.m. the General Assembly of AESC members will be held. All members will receive separate invitations.

For updates on the planning, please visit us at the Facebook group „Association of European Studies for the Caucasus”. Important updates will also be posted on the website of the Association <<http://aesc-online.eu>>.

AESC 2017 programme

(Programme is subject to further changes)

27 April 2017

10:00 Opening

10:30 Welcome by AESC President

11:00 **Academic Workshop No. 1: The Changing Regional Geographies in Europe and its Eastern Neighbours**

- The Black Sea Cooperation in the Context of Sub-regionalism and Inter-regionalism, *Mukhtar Hajizada (Khazar University, Department of Political Science and International Relations)*
- The Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation: Opportunities and Limits in Three Decades, *Itir Toksöz Bullens (Dogus University, Department of International Relations)*
- Turkey and the Union for Mediterranean, *Armağan Gözkaman (Beykent University, Department of International Relations)*

13:00 Lunch break

14:30 **Workshop (continued)**

- Turkey's Black Sea Policy and the EU, *Filiz Tutku Aydin (Social Sciences University of Ankara)*
 - Tatarstan: A Meeting Point of Russian and Turkic Worlds, *Aleksandra Yatsyk (Institute of Human Sciences, Vienna)*
 - People or Territories: The Geo-/ Biopolitical Dilemmas for Georgia and Ukraine, *Andrey Makarychev (University of Tartu, Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies)*
 - Trans-regional Education Cooperation Black Sea-Caspian Region between Post-Soviet Transformation and Transition to a European Framework, *Oleg Mironov (Centre for trans-regional Studies and Crisis Development Policy)*
- 18:00 End of day

28 April 2017

10:00 **Academic Workshop No. 2: Foreign and Security Policy Implications of Europeanisation in the Caucasus**

- Securitization of Economic Integration Decisions: Armenia and the Eurasian Economic Union, *Seyit Ali Avcu (Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University)*
- Europeanisation of Georgia: Security Concerns, *Gvantsa Davitashvili (Caucasus School of Law)*
- The ENI in the Caucasus and Cooperation Opportunities with Turkey, *Damla Cihangir (Sabanci University)*
- With Turkey against Russia? European Common Energy Policy, *Seda Hanegelioglu (Yeditepe University)*

13:00 Lunch break

14:30 **Special Panel 1: China and Central Asia in the Caucasus Region**

- (Re-) evaluating European Union - Central Asian Relations: An Integration Perspective, *Akbota Zholdasbekova (Faculty of International Relations, Gumilyev Eurasian National University)*
- (Re-) Assessing the New Silk Road for an Integrated Europe-Asia, *Punit Gaur and Aigerim Ospanov (Gumilev Eurasian National University)*
- Chinese One Belt One Road Project and the Stability in the Eastern Mediterranean, *Seyit Ali Avcu (Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University)*

14:30 **Special Panel 2: Georgia**

- The Parliamentary Election in Georgia 2016: A Policy Analysis Perspective, *Oliver Reisner (Ilia State University)*
- Georgia's Linguistic Policy toward its National Minorities in the Context of Europeanisation: Actors, Debates and Paradigms, *Ana Lolua (Ilia State University)*
- Georgia and the Issue of Turkey's Membership in the EU, *Maia Manchkhachvili (Tbilisi State University)*

17:00 General Assembly AESC

18:00 End of day two



2 – Upcoming DESCnet events

Summer School „European Integration and Energy Security in the South Caucasus“ Yerevan State University

14 – 24 July 2017

DESCnet will hold its fourth seasonal school on the topic „European Integration and Energy Security“ (6 ECTS) in mid-July 2017 in Armenia, organised by the Centre for European Studies of Yerevan State University. The School will serve as a platform to discuss and elaborate on current challenges in the areas of European integration and energy security which the region faces. The summer school is open to undergraduate and graduate students from the region and beyond who are interested in international relations, European integration, political science, and energy security. The language of instruction is English.

The main aim of the school is to debate over energy security policies within the EU's Foreign and Security policy framework and to examine existing challenges and alternatives in the Caucasus with a view to existing conflicts, closed borders as well as issues of economic development.

The school programme will offer a critical analysis of existing foreign and security policy, European integration policies in the region as well as energy security in the Caucasus region. Being designed as a student-oriented school, it implies active participation of participants. Apart from individual and group work, school participants will have a mixture of issue-related lectures, workshops and debates that will be offered by an international team of lecturers from Yerevan State University, University of Graz, Tartu University and other DESCnet partner universities. To obtain required credits, students will be obliged to participate in seminars, group and project works.

Thematic courses:

- Introduction to European integration
- European integration, economic integration and energy policies
- Basics of EU's Foreign and Security policy: regional implications
- Energy security on EU's EFSP agenda
- Energy, Biopolitics and Governmentality: Regional implications

Teaching Staff

- Ass. Prof. Dr. Narek Galstyan, PhD in Political Science, Faculty of International Relations, Yerevan State University, Armenia
- Dr. Aram Terzian, PhD in Political Science, Centre for European Studies, Yerevan State University, Armenia
- Dr. Benedikt Harzl, MA, Russian Eastern European & Eurasian Studies Centre, Faculty of Law, University of Graz, Austria
- Dr. Erhard Busek, formerly Vice-Chancellor of the Republic of Austria
- Prof. Dr. Hubert Isak, Department of European Law, University of Graz, Austria
- Aiste Mickonyte, BA, LLM, Russian Eastern European & Eurasian Studies Centre, Faculty of Law, University of Graz, Austria
- Prof. Andrey Makarychev, Visiting Professor, Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies, University of Tartu, Estonia

Call for applications:

The call for participation will be available in mid-April / May 2017 at <http://descnet.eu> as well as on all available social media pages, websites of partner universities and through various networks. The participants will be asked to pay a fee to cover school-related costs. A more detailed programme will be available later.



3 — Disseminating DESCnet

Winter School „European Integration and Anti-Corruption Studies in the Caucasus“ North Caucasus Federal University Stavropol, Russian Federation 27 February – 6 March 2017



Following up on last year's DESCnet winter school in Pyatigorsk, the North Caucasus Federal University this year hosted the winter school „European Integration and Anti-Corruption Studies“ in Stavropol. Classes were held in the new building of the Legal Institute which is a major landmark on the NCFU campus. Students

were accommodated in the 4* Eurootel in downtown Stavropol. Organizers thus did not spare any effort to provide an efficient and accommodating experience.

Following a call for papers which went out to B.A. and M.A. students (in their early years of studies) from the DESCnet region and beyond, the selection of participants created a diverse and friendly group of participants. Students hailed from Armenia, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, the Arab Emirates, Pakistan, Sudan, Uganda and, of course, from the Russian Federation.

The School was opened by a series of lectures by Khachik Kharutyunyan from Yerevan State University who also serves as an expert with Transparency International Armenia. He gave an overview of the concept and types of corruption and analyzed the impact of corruption on the

development of state and society. The international dimension of the fight against corruption and new developments of the post-UNCAC era were brought to participants by Thomas Kruessmann, representing University of Tartu. Lecturers from North Caucasus University such as Viktoriya Savina, Anatolii Kiselev and Artur Sarukhanyan presented lectures on historical dimensions of corruption, state



responses, in particular in criminal law, and the role of civil society. Following each lecture, participants had the opportunity to engage in group work and discuss a number of cases and practice examples.



One important aspect of the School was also its social programme. Participants were invited to learn more about Stavropol and its surroundings. And on the weekend, all participants were

taken on a two-day trip to the beautiful mountains of the Karachaevo-Cherkessk Republic.

Participants earned 6 ECTS for their studies. And hopefully, they will take with them even more valuable experiences and recollections.

4 — Related upcoming events



UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
Johan Skytte Institute of
Political Studies

Third Eastern Platform – Tartu Seminar

„A Divided Continent in Search of a Common Language“

Tartu 7-8 April 2017

„Eastern Platform-Platform Ukraine“ is a multi-disciplinary initiative aiming to analyse and better understand the most recent development in the relations between the EU and Russia and their shared neighbourhood, starting from the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 and the ensuing deterioration of relations between the West and Moscow by creating a unified resource and network of academics studying the post-socialist space. It has the ambition to develop and grow as a forum and incubator to promote high-quality research and knowledge-sharing on the broader post-Soviet space.

Academic conveners of the event are Dr Stefano Braghiroli (University of Tartu) and Prof Andrey Makarychev (University of Tartu). The Tartu Seminar „A divided continent in search of a common language?“ represents the third edition in a series of annual events launched in 2015.

The seminar constitutes an opportunity for researchers and practitioners from very different disciplinary areas to debate and discuss potential future practical and conceptual scenarios that might characterize the region in years to come. Multiple crises and growing uncertainty are not only undermining the post-Cold War security architecture in Europe, but also challenging agreed definitions of „borders“ and „neighbourhoods“. The event seeks to shed light on the evolution of the multiple crises affecting Europe and analyse possible short- and mid-term geo-political developments (i.e. escalation, stabilisation, normalisation, and frozen conflict) and their impact on EU-Russia and West-Russia relations. Given the temporal proximity of the event to Estonian presidency of the Council of EU, specific attention will be devoted to the priorities and challenges of the forthcoming presidency and to Nordic-Baltic cooperation. In the 25th anniversary of the collapse of the USSR, further debate and in-depth academic discussion seem necessary in the light of the

evolution of Moscow's traditional chameleonic role as both a friend and foe for the EU over the past decades. Despite the current diplomatic black-out, in the long term, both the EU and Russia will need to find a common language again to address common global challenges, given the high level of interdependence that has characterised the Eurasian space since the events of 1991 and which has been dramatically challenged by the current developments in Ukraine.

The programme is available at

<http://skytte.ut.ee/en/about-institute/eastern-platform-seminar>

Balkans & Black Sea Co-operation Forum Serres (Greece) 25-26 May 2017

The Balkans & the Black Sea region holds major importance for Southeast European stability and development. Strategically located at the crossroads of Europe, Middle East and Central Asia, this region is part of a critical eco-system which requires multilevel approach for gaining mutual understanding and cross-border cooperation.

The Balkans & Black Sea Cooperation Forum is bringing forward the latest updates of best practices, business models, creative tools and fresh ideas, enhancing its stakeholders with all possible areas of sustainable stability, growth, cooperation.

The Balkans & Black Sea Cooperation Forum focuses on highlight cross-border cooperation, enhance bilateral and multilateral relations, strengthen and generate economic and business growth, facilitate mutual understanding and sustainable development among the Balkan and the Black Sea Region.

Registration is open via

<<http://balkansblackseaforum.org/register/>>

4 — Related upcoming events

Second Tartu Conference on Russian and East European Studies „The Russian Revolution and Its Legacies: Taking Stock a Century Later” Tartu (Estonia), 4-6 June 2017



UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
 Johan Skytte Institute of
 Political Studies

The Centre for EU-Russia Studies at the University of Tartu, the Global Europe Centre at the University of Kent, and the Uppsala Centre for Russian and Eurasian

Studies at Uppsala University are announcing the Second Annual Tartu Conference on Russian and East European Studies.

The Conference is a venue for academic discussion of the fundamental cultural, social, economic and political trends affecting all aspects of people's life in Russia and Eastern Europe. The First Tartu Conference, held in June 2016, brought together more than 200 scholars from across multiple disciplines, from the region and beyond. Participants of the 2017 conference are invited to share their reflections on the Russian revolution of 1917 and the ensuing developments in Russia, Eastern Europe and elsewhere in the world. How are they represented and interpreted today by professional historians, various political actors and the wider public? What was their impact on culture, the economy, political systems, ideologies and social structures? Which legacies and path-dependencies going back to 1917 continue to be relevant today for memory politics, value systems, social institutions, the economy and international relations? What does an analysis of 1917 and its legacies contribute to the comparative study of revolutions? How can the liberating potential of popular struggles against exploitation and oppression be harnessed, and can social orders be transformed without resorting to violence? How do we keep alive the memory of the victims of twentieth-century totalitarianism and defend democracy against mounting challenges?

More information is available at
<http://www.uptake.ut.ee/cfp-second-tartu-conference-on-russian-and-east-european-studies/>.

7th International Neighbourhood Symposium “Changemakers in the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Mediterranean South” Odessa (Ukraine), 13 – 18 June 2017

The Center for International and European Studies (CIES) at Kadir Has University will hold the 7th International Neighbourhood Symposium (INS) in co-operation with local partners: UA: Ukraine Analytica and the Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”.

The INS focuses principally on the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Mediterranean South, two regions that are shared neighbourhoods of the European Union, its member states, the Russian Federation, and Turkey. While each region is distinct with its own historical, political, social, cultural and economic features; their contiguity implies a number of synergies and shared experiences on a variety of themes ranging from systemic dynamics to societal prerogatives. The INS aims to promote further understanding and co-operation in the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Mediterranean South and beyond by providing a forum for study, dialogue and networking in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment.

The aim of the 2017 edition of the International Neighbourhood Symposium is to discuss, assess, and understand the regional dynamics as well as the impact these are having on the transformation of the societies of the countries of the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Mediterranean South during the first two days of the Symposium. Expert discussions will also bring the spotlight on a number of societal concerns as diverse as politics, the role of the media, our understanding of democracy, the nexus of international development and humanitarian work, and the potential of cultural cities. In other words, while an understanding of the key dynamics at play is imperative, it is also incumbent to debate and explore how changemakers, that symbolize the potential of human capital, can affect change.

4 — Related upcoming events

4th International Conference on Eurasian Politics & Society (IEPAS 2017) Istanbul (Turkey), 1-2 July 2017

This international and interdisciplinary conference will again bring together a range of academics and practitioners to discuss new directions of research and discovery on Eurasian Studies. IEPAS2017 will afford the opportunity for networking new relationships, hearing the latest research, presenting and publishing before a global audience and experiencing Turkey.

Under the general topic of „Civilization and World Politics“, IEPAS2017 is soliciting papers and presentations to the following topics:

- Turkey in Eurasia
- Turkic Countries
- Geopolitics of Eurasia
- Energy Politics and Energy Security of Eurasia
- Globalisation in Eurasia
- Regions and Regionalism in Eurasia
- Islamic Movements in Eurasia
- Democracy in Eurasia
- Civilisation & Diplomacy in Eurasia
- Modernization in Eurasia
- Migration in Eurasia
- Terrorism and Eurasia
- Cultural Diplomacy in Eurasia
- Eurasia in World Politics
- Historical Perspectives to Eurasia
- Major and Regional Powers in Eurasia
- The Socio-Economic Structure and Future of Eurasia
- Conflicts and Conflict Resolution in Eurasia

More information is available at <http://eurasianpoliticsandsociety.org/call-for-papers>. The abstract submission deadline is 1 April 2017, the registration deadline for presenters 15 May 2017.

Summer School „The Concept of Eastern Partnership: Potentials and Problems“ (in German) University of Passau (Germany), 3-7 July 2017

The deadline for registration was 28 February 2017. More information (in German) is available at <http://www.uni-passau.de/internationales/internationale-gruppen/perspektive-osteuropa/daad-sommerschule-2017/#c121882>.

XIX World Festival of Youth and Students Sochi (Russia), 14 – 22 October 2017 Sochi (Russia)

The Festival is a platform for dialogue and a form of international communication. Discussions, a cultural programme, sporting competitions and an open dialogue will help its participants to find a response to the challenges facing young people today. The Festival's discussion programme includes various platforms, panel discussion, open lectures and scientific conferences. The key issues on the preliminary agenda are as follows: "Culture and globalisation", "Global economy", "Knowledge economy", "Social institutions' development" and "Politics and international security".

More than 20.000 young people from 150 countries will participate in the Festival. The Festival's working languages are the 6 official languages of the United Nations. The platform will gather young leaders from various spheres: representatives of youth NGOs, young journalists, artists and sportsmen, leaders of youth organisations and political parties, young professors and scientists, as well as compatriots and foreigners who study the Russian language and are interested in Russian culture.

Updates on the Festival are available on the official website: <http://russia2017.com/> as well as on the Festival's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/wfys2017/>

5 — News and ongoing

Changes in the research landscape: No more Academic Swiss Caucasus Net (ASCN)

The acclaimed ASCN programme (http://www.ascn.ch/en/about_ascn.html), financed by Gebert Rüf Stiftung since 2009, has come to an end by December 2016. It aimed at strengthening research in the social sciences and humanities in the South Caucasus and helping to bring it up to European standards. Its emphasis was on individuals and helping them to become better integrated in international academic networks through the programme. Initially, the ASCN programme focused primarily on Georgia. In 2011, activities were extended to include Armenia. Research partnerships between scientists from these two countries is encouraged. The network of ASCN researchers can still be contacted via Facebook <<https://www.facebook.com/groups/103267476421320/?ref=ts&fref=ts>>.

Civic Initiative „We Build Europe (WBE)” introduces the „THINK Network”

In co-operation with AESC and as a possible platform for launching policy-oriented strategic advice, the civic initiative „We Build Europe” around Ingo Mayr-Knoch (Master in International Security, Sciences Politique) proposes to set up a network to collect and elaborate strategic advice on issues related to the European Neighbourhood Policy. The “THINK Network” addresses the dilemmas of strategic decision-making today by developing a common situational picture between strategy actors in Europe that is as factual as possible to improve the basis for strategic decision-making. The “THINK Network” will give the public access to information products to counter disinformation in the media and research. The “THINK Network” will develop information products in the strategic spheres of politics, economy and finance, information, research, security, and social, cultural and religious actors. It will identify the information requirements of key strategic actors in these six strategic fields in Europe. It will design analytical products specifically tailored to address their needs. It will establish a reliable, dynamic knowledge-base to help strategy actors to detect risks and manage them before they evolve into crises.

The “THINK Network” will become a research network connecting individual researchers, research centers, universities, and think tanks from all over Europe. It will connect research actors with state and non-state strategy actors from the six strategic fields mentioned above. Within the “THINK Network” monthly situational analyses of the strategic trends in the countries and regions in Europe will be developed. The situational analyses will highlight the strategy changes of main actors in the countries and regions in each of the six strategic fields. Based on this strategy, forecasts and strategy recommendations will be conducted.

Together with its research partners, the “THINK Network” will develop a research methodology for strategy analysis, a so-called “Hybrid Strategy methodology”, to ensure the intellectual coherence of its products. Reports are written by local experts within their national context and synthesised on the level of the regions. Products will be rigorously fact-checked, peer reviewed, and discussed among the researchers and strategy actors in the research network. Competing analyses will be encouraged.

Ingo Mayr-Knoch
We Build Europe
ingo.mayrknoch@sciencespo.fr

5 — News and ongoing (cont.)

University of Ghent opens online discussion forum on the European Neighbourhood Policy

As part of an MA course on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) taught at Ghent University (Belgium), an online discussion forum has been launched, which offers students following the course an opportunity to exchange views on the ENP with their peers from the ENP countries, including Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The online discussion forum, called 'Neighbours', has both a general section and separate sections dedicated to specific themes.

In the general section, students can post questions and comments on broader issues relating to the ENP, such as the (in)effectiveness of the policy and how it could be improved further.

The forum's seven thematic sections cover migration; energy and environment; values, norms and principles; trade and economic integration; conflict management; financial and technical assistance; and Russia and the sanctions. Within these thematic sections, students can debate current issues and 'hot topics' relating to the respective themes, as well as raise questions about the (in)effectiveness and impact of EU's instruments and approaches concerning the respective theme. Examples of questions that can be discussed under each thematic section are listed below:

1. Migration
Has the EU responded adequately to the refugee crisis? Could the EU have avoided the refugee crisis? Does the EU provide sufficient support to countries like Jordan and Lebanon for dealing with the influx of refugees from Syria?
2. Energy and environment
Is the EU-Russia relationship in the field of energy a relationship of dependence or interdependence? Is energy a weapon or a commodity?
3. Values, norms & principles
Should the EU do more or less to promote values in the countries covered under the ENP? Should the EU differentiate more between those countries that are committed to political liberalization and implementing reforms and those countries that are less committed to these goals?
4. Trade & economic integration
Will economic integration into the EU through the DCFTAs benefit Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova? Do the benefits of economic integration into the EU outweigh the costs?
5. Conflict management
How should the ENP goal of a 'ring' of closely associated stable 'friends' be evaluated in light of the recent developments in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood? What does the EU's response to the events in Syria and Ukraine tell us about the EU as a foreign policy and a crisis manager actor, and about the ENP as a framework policy? Does the EU focus sufficiently on the root causes of the conflicts in the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood? Or is it more preoccupied with addressing 'conflict symptoms'?
6. Financial & technical assistance
Does the EU provide sufficient funding/assistance to the ENP countries? Are the EU's instruments and programmes adequate for addressing the ENP countries' problems and helping them with domestic reforms? What role can EU member states play in the delivery of EU development assistance to the ENP countries?
7. Russia & sanctions
Why is there tension between the EU and Russia and their respective policies towards states in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus? What is the best way for the EU to deal with this tension? Should the EU's sanctions imposed on Russia be lifted?

The website of the 'Neighbours' online discussion forum is
<<https://muut.com/neighbours/#!/general>>. Interested students from the counties covered under the ENP are welcome to join and initiate debates.

Fabienne Bossuyt
University of Ghent

6 – Reports, opinions and comments

Conference "The South Caucasus at a Time of Shifting International Paradigms"

St. Antony's College, Oxford University, 27 – 28

February 2017

More than fifty academics, diplomats, regional experts and activists from the South Caucasus, wider Europe and beyond, gathered in Oxford for a conference held at St Antony's College Oxford organised by Oxford University and the British organisation LINKS. The event opened on 27 February with a lecture on Georgian politics by Dr Jonathan Wheatley of Oxford Brooks University.

Participants were welcomed by Dame Audrey Glover, who chaired the first session. Atanas Baltov, Political Advisor to the EU Special representative for the South Caucasus made opening remarks during which he highlighted the EU's continued interest in and support for the South Caucasus region and countries. He welcomed the initiative to organise the Oxford event as a practical contribution to the search for peace in the region.

In the first part of the conference, participants focused on the international situation and its impact on the region. The session was chaired by Professor Roy Allison of Oxford University and presentations were made by Neil Melvin from SIPRI, Stockholm, Professor Pavel Baev from PRIO, Oslo, Professor Mustafa Aydin from Kader Has University, Istanbul, Eldar Mammedov from the European Parliament Sand D Group Foreign Affairs Team, and Craig Oliphant from the FPC in London.

Speakers raised concerns about the immediate future security situation as the west continues to be distracted by Brexit and an unpredictable political situation in the United States. Speakers warned against the consequences of a possible vacuum in the region in the face of increased Russian assertiveness. The role of Turkey, Iran, the EU, the US and the UK were discussed in detail.

The second part of the conference focused on Karabakh conflict and the domestic political situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan. A panel discussion chaired by Professor Neil Macfarlane of Oxford University included presentations from Dr Laurence Broers from Chatham House, Hikmat Hadjiev the Spokesperson at the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry and Armen Liloyan, Minister Plenipotentiary at the Embassy of Armenia in London.

Hikmat Hadjiev said that the international community does not appreciate the threat perception of Azerbaijan. The situation on the line of contact is very difficult with one hundred thousand soldiers facing each other. He said Armenia has switched to a deterrence with a possible option of pre-emptive strike. In the current situation both war and peace are possible. The peace option was still there. Azerbaijan has said clearly there will never be a second Armenian state on Azerbaijani territory but Azerbaijan has offered the option of a Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous republic. Hajiev said the present generation has a duty to resolve the conflict and not leave it for future generations.

On his part Armen Liloyan said that for Armenians Nagorno-Karabakh is an existential issue. Self-determination is a basic right enshrined in the UN charter. The April 2016 fighting had resulted in many atrocities against Armenians. He said that Azerbaijani leaders have become prisoners of their own rhetoric on the use of force. Liloyan said presently the problem with the peace is trust and political will. Armen Liloyan said that Armenia supports the work of the Minsk group in the present format. They cannot resolve the conflict but they can facilitate and contribute towards the settlement. An interesting discussion followed and many of those present welcomed the constructive tone of the discussion, and the constructive ideas presented.

This was followed by another panel, with the participation of Dr Mikayel Zolyan from RSC, Armenia, Ahmad Alili from CESD in Baku and Dr Dennis Sammut from LINKS in London that focussed on the domestic politics in Armenia and Azerbaijan and its impact on the Karabakh conflict resolution process, as well as the role of the conflict affected populations. The panel focused on current political trends, and the impact of the conflict on the political discourse. The need to engage more with political elites in order to increase the chances of a successful peace process was highlighted.

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6 — Reports, opinions and comments (cont.)

**Conference „Instrumentalising the Recent Past in Foreign Policy: The Legitimisation of External Intervention in the Former Soviet Space”
National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest (Romania) 20 - 21 October 2016**

The conference aimed to gather promising young academics and accomplished professionals, representing a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives from around the world, to share their research outcomes. The Rector of the University, Prof. Remus Pricopie, opened the conference. He was followed by the Dean of the Department of International Relations and European Integration, Prof. Iordan Gheorghe Barbulescu. His speech focused on the contribution of the University to the development and strengthening of the public sector. In particular, he emphasized that graduates gain a high level of knowledge and experience in EU integration process based on the Romanian case, thus becoming capable of contributing and participating in the institutional capacity-building of the country.

The conference's goal was to evaluate the impact of Russian politics on the political agenda of post-Soviet countries. The keynote lecture was given by Prof. Andreas Umland (Institute for Euro-Atlantic Cooperation, Kiev) who talked about “Pragmatism or Revisionism? The Sources of Russia’s Foreign policy in the former Soviet Space”.

I had the honour to participate in the panel „In Search of New Concepts for Defining the Emerging Security Challenges in Eastern Europe”, where I presented a paper on “Power Competition between the EU and Russia in the Discourse of Europeanisation”. My contribution aimed to define the role and actual impact of foreign policy priorities of Georgia on its European integration process. I considered the selection of the case of Georgia critically important to explain the power competition in the common neighbourhood of the EU and the Russian Federation.

My argument is that the demonstrated application of

I develop this argument against the background of emerging geo-political challenges in the common neighbourhood of the EU and the Russian Federation, in line with the on-going integration project of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and the upgrading of bilateral relations of the EU towards Eastern Europe, particularly in the Eastern Partnership format. Clearly, it's been foremost Georgia that has gone through a number of domestic political transitions that coincided with the before mentioned developments. The alternative framework of co-operation created by the Russian Federation introduced a new wave of competition between the external powers in their common neighbourhood. So, the countries of the Eastern Partnership had a choice to either join the EEU or to prolong the political association and economic integration process with the EU. This dilemma gained geo-political importance and became the subject of strategic security decisions. Ironically, while deeper co-operation between the countries of the South Caucasus and the EU should have covered 'all but security', the association process with the EU provoked additional and increasing security challenges in the region. On the whole, this international conference gave an important possibility to researchers from the South Caucasus, the EU and the Russian Federation to address the common challenges in various discourses and perspectives, thus opened a new room for further co-operation though sharing expertise on critically important security-related issues.

*Gvantsa Davitashvili
Lecturer at Caucasus School of Law*



6 – Reports, opinions and comments (cont.)

Final Policy Recommendations CASCADE – Exploring the Security-Democracy Nexus in the Caucasus



If the EU is to contribute to security and democracy in the Caucasus, it has to become far more (pro)active and visible in the region while at the same time avoiding provoking tensions with Russia in connection with the latter's own regional integration initiatives. To succeed, the EU will need not only a revised set of national policies, but also a path-breaking strategy that can be sustained in the long run. In the Caucasus, the EU should adjust its policies and increase its peace-building efforts.

The Caucasus is a complex region with unresolved conflicts and rising religious and security tensions. The region is also characterised by recurring political instability and economic crisis. Weak or defective governance contributes to breeding transnational criminal activity, poverty, inequality and corruption. As the countries of the South Caucasus are very diverse, the EU ought to take into account country specific needs and expectations in its promotion of stability and democracy.

Mobility: There is a lack of understanding in the EU about the importance of circular migration as a tool for resolving socio-economic issues in the EU Member States. Therefore, the EU institutions and the Member States should adopt measures that encourage circular migration. To convince reluctant Member States, the European Commission has to make more effort to ensure that third actors, e.g. civil society, businesses and other groups that have an interest in circular migration are represented in the dialogue.

Socio-economic developments in the North Caucasus: Research in the North Caucasus showed that in this particular region the EU's external policy should be focused exclusively on economic co-operation, people to people contacts and promotion of the region as an attractive tourist destination. In regards to economic assistance, for example, the experience of European enterprises in agricultural industry can be useful for North Caucasian small and medium businesses. Thus, SME trainings and workshops might be a first step to start small bilateral co-operation. However, it should be noted that the implementation of the recommendations might be possible only after establishing good contacts within the authorities in the North Caucasus.

Religion and Politics: Religions can play a positive role in democratisation by contributing to inclusion. In both North and South Caucasus religion plays an important role in society by forming attitudes towards new European realms. Therefore, the EU should not neglect religion and the Church while shaping its relations with Caucasus countries. Moreover, the EU should support NGOs and other civil society actors by organising multi-confessional dialogues. The EU's support for initiatives such as training programmes on issues related to religious pluralism, religious freedom and the neutrality of the state for state officials and actors can be a first step in shaping state discourse on "tolerance" and policies towards religious groups.

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6 — Reports, opinions and comments (cont.)

Conflicts and peace-building: From the perspective of the democracy-security nexus in the Caucasus, conflicts play an important role in the region. Resolution of those conflicts is a key issue for political stability and economic prosperity. The 2008 Georgia-Russia war provided a particularly strong impetus both to EU and Russian efforts to link the South Caucasus to wider regional projects. In the context of competition from the Eurasian Economic Union, opposition from Russia and the EU's lack of appetite for enlargement, 'Europeanisation' has lost its traction as a means of conflict management and termination. All three South Caucasus countries expect greater EU involvement in conflict resolution. The EU's approach to the South Caucasus should link more closely the ENP and the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Conflict prevention, management and resolution should both shape and underpin the ENP, which needs stronger Member States' backing. The EU should also prevent further integration of the breakaway regions into Russia by building a genuinely attractive offer within the political framework of 'engagement without recognition'.

The Caucasus and the wider neighbourhood: The EU looks to reshape its role in the South Caucasus through reviews of the ENP and the EU global strategy. It should identify effective strategies to resolve the protracted conflicts in the absence of a membership prospect. The EU also needs to take account of the Russian factor in its policies vis-à-vis the South Caucasus region. This suggests a pragmatic approach as to how the Association Agreement and DCFTA and the Eurasian Economic Union can coexist in the region. In particular, the EU should ensure that the few regional economic links across the region are not harmed by the existence of incompatible economic schemes in the Caucasus. The basis for external action should not lie in creating a new mini-region within the Eastern Partnership, but in building stronger tailor-

made bilateral ties with each of the countries, complemented by a renewed multilateral co-operation format.

Perceptions and roles of the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia have strong expectations from the EU. However, these do not necessarily always coincide with the EU's vision of its own role in the region. The EU's long-term governance agenda and indirect approach to conflict resolution is at odds with South Caucasus countries' prioritisation of conflict resolution. The EU's conception as a 'normative power' in both the political and economic spheres only resonates with specific categories of actors, i.e. amongst the political elites in Georgia and Armenia and civil society in Azerbaijan. However, this resonance mainly builds upon what the EU is – a community of democratic states – rather than upon what the EU does. While viewed positively, the EU's own policies weaken its image. The more the EU proclaims its ambitious policy goals, the more it is criticised for either proclaiming them (e.g. by the ruling elites in Azerbaijan) or not living up to expectations (e.g. civil society in Azerbaijan and elites in Armenia and Georgia on specific issues).

The ongoing fragility and fragmentation of the Caucasus is not likely to be repaired anytime soon as the region is prone to domestic instability, inflammable protracted conflicts and Russia's extensive influence. The EU cannot and will not take more responsibility in fixing what is broken in the region, but it can have a positive effect on its development, provided that it can design a clearer and firmer long-term vision of its relations with North and South Caucasus countries.

Elina Chilingaryan
CASCADE Communications Manager

7 – New publications

Akyüz, Latife

Ethnicity, Gender and the Border Economy. Living in the Georgia-Turkey Borderlands, Routledge: Oxford 2017

For whom and why are borders drawn? What are the symbolic projections of these physical realities? And what are the symbolic projections of these physical realities? Constituted by experience and memory, borders shape a "border image" in the minds and social memory of people beyond the lines of the state. In the case of the Turkey-Georgia border, the image of the border has often been constructed as an economic reality that creates "conditional permeabilities" rather than political emphases. This book puts forward the argument that participation in this economic life reshapes the relationship between the ethnic groups who live in the borderland as well as gender relations. By drawing on detailed ethnographic research at the Turkey-Georgia border, life at the border is explored in terms of family relations, work life, and intra- and inter-ethnic group relations. Using an intersectional approach, the book charts the perceptions and representations of how different ethnic and gendered groups experience interactions among themselves, with each other, and with the changing economic context.

Heuser, Christian:

Deutsche Rechtsreformberatung zur Unterstützung der Systemtransformation in der Republik Aserbaidschan. Eine Untersuchung im Umfeld von Rechtsexport und Wettbewerb der Rechtsordnungen

Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag: Berlin 2016

The book examines the question how a Western-style legal order can be implemented in a country under transformation and with a different cultural background. The approach to this is primarily legal, but it also draws on methodologies of legal history, neo-institutional economics and legal sociology. The book shows the problem areas that open up and the solutions offered by legal advisors. A special emphasis is placed on the geopolitical environment of legal advice, in particular the increasing level of competition between legal advisors from the Western world.

Curro, Constanza

A Critical Assessment of Informal Practices as Resistance: The Case of *birzha* in Georgia

Caucasus Survey, published online: 09 Feb 2017

This paper investigates the form of male street socialization known as *birzha* as an informal practice which upholds norms opposed to those emanating from official institutions. Repressed by state power, *birzha* falls into the conceptual framework which regards informal practices as forms of resistance generating counter-hegemonic narratives vis-à-vis the official system. The paper questions this framework's appropriateness for understanding informality, analysing *birzha* as an ambivalent practice which does not fit the notion of resistance. Drawing upon fieldwork data, literary and media sources, the relation between *birzha* and state power in late Soviet years, in the 1990s, and under Saakashvili's rule (2003–2012) is analysed. The paper indicates that the relation between *birzha* and official power has been alternatively underpinned by toleration, mutual dependence, or repression. Yet, *birzha* has a hierarchical and conservative structure which thwarts its potential as a source of social and political change. The conceptualisation of informal practices as resistance is critically assessed along two lines. Firstly, the "romanticisation" of informality denies the impact that certain practices may have on wider social and political debates. Secondly, a perspective on informal practices as counter-hegemonic overlooks these practices' ambivalence between openness and selectivity, equality and hierarchy, and change and conservation.

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7 – New publications (cont.)

Delcour, Laure

The EU and Russia in their „Contested Neighbourhood“, Routledge: Oxford 2017

The literature on the EU influence in its Eastern neighbourhood has tended to focus on EU-level policies and prioritizes EU-related variables. This book seeks to overcome this EU-centric approach by connecting EU policy transfer to the domestic and regional environment in which it unfolds. It looks at the way in which the EU seeks to influence domestic change in the post-Soviet countries participating in the European Neighbourhood Policy/Eastern Partnership and domestic receptivity to EU policies and templates. It seeks to disentangle the various dynamics behind domestic change (or lack thereof) in Eastern Partnership countries, including EU policy mechanisms, domestic elites' preferences and strategies, regional interdependences and Russia's policies. Based upon extensive empirical investigation on EU policies in four countries; Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – and in two pivotal policy sectors – the book provides systematic and nuanced understanding of complex forces at work in the policy transfer process.

Jödicke, Ansgar (ed.)

**Religion and Soft Power in the South Caucasus
Routledge: Oxford 2018 (available for pre-order)**

In the Caucasus region, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and their powerful neighbours Russia, Turkey, Iran and the EU negotiate their future policies and spheres of influences. This volume explores the role of religion in the South Caucasus to describe and explain how transnational religious relationships intermingle with transnational political relationships. 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.

Jackman, Danielle

Partial Russian Justice in Chechnya: The Lapin Case, Anna Politkovskaya, and Transnational Activism, *Journal of Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society* 2016 Vol. 2 No. 2 pp. 145-188

Sustained by a transnational network of activists, the Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya was able to achieve a form of "partial justice" for victims of human rights violations in Chechnya. One such victim was Zelimkhan Murdalov, a 26-year-old Chechen civilian who was arbitrarily arrested, incarcerated, tortured, and murdered by the Russian police officer Sergei Lapin and his colleagues. Murdalov's fate became the most famous of thousands of "disappearances" during the second Russo-Chechen conflict. The Lapin case resulted in the first conviction of a Russian police officer for the torture and disappearance of a Chechen civilian. This article shows how this case was both provoked and driven by the publicity, investigations, and international pressure brought to bear by Politkovskaya's network. Based on original research and numerous interviews conducted in Russia and Europe with Anna Politkovskaya's key contacts, it casts fresh light on the campaign and Politkovskaya's role more generally within a transnational human rights network.

Youngs, Richard

Europe's Eastern Crisis: The Geopolitics of Asymmetry, *Carnegie Europe*: 2017

In recent years, a series of crises have erupted on the EU's eastern borders. Russia's annexation of Crimea and the subsequent conflict in eastern Ukraine presented the EU with a major foreign policy challenge, both in Ukraine and across the other countries of the Eastern partnership. In response, the EU has begun to map its own form of „liberal-redux geopolitics“ that combines various strategic logics. This book traces the effect of these crises on the foreign policy of the EU, examining the changes in policies toward the countries of its eastern borders, the EU's review of the Eastern Partnership, as well as the EU's relations with Russia overall. It goes on to uncover whether the EU has contained the crisis or if it has set up new conditions for more instability in the future.

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7 — New publications (cont.)

Makarychev, Andrey

Russian (In-) Security: Cultures, Meanings and Contexts, *Security in Transition (SIT) Working Paper SiT/DP/07/16*

In this paper I propose a cultural reading of security, focusing on Russia as a case study. Following Alexander Wendt's logic of "cultures of anarchy", I treat the sphere of security as generative of cultural meanings constitutive for international actors' identities. It is through discourses and images that different conceptualizations of security are constantly (re)constructed and applied to various policy issues. In this sense, different security cultures can be discussed as regimes of signification and representation that are essential for (re)producing Russia's international subjectivity through a series of speech acts aimed to stabilize and secure Russian identity. As seen from this perspective, key issues are how various security discourses are instrumental for repositioning Russia both spatially (vis-à-vis its external Others), and temporally (vis-à-vis Russia's own past). It is this recurrent dynamic of interiorization and exteriorization of different meanings (through either textual narratives or imageries generating multiple self-other distinctions) that defines the cultural background of security debates in Russia.

Makarychev, Andrey / Yatskyk, Alexandra

Biopower and Geopolitics as Russia's Neighborhood Strategies: Reconnecting People or Reaggregating Lands? *Nationalities Papers* 2017 Vol. 45 No. 1 (forthcoming)

In this article, we address geopolitics and biopower as two different yet mutually correlative discursive strategies of sovereign power in Russia. We challenge the dominant realist approaches to Russia's neighborhood policy by introducing the concept of biopolitics as its key element, which makes analysis of political relations in the post-Soviet area more nuanced and variegated. More specifically, we address an important distinction between geopolitical control over territories and management of population as two of Russia's strategies in its "near abroad."

Prelz Oltramonti, Giulia

Trajectories of Illegality and Informality in Conflict Protraction: The Abkhaz-Georgian Case, *Caucasus Survey*, published online: 14 Feb 2017

This article explores how the protraction of conflict shapes the management of economic activities and, more specifically, the illegality/informality divide. Its main argument is that, in contexts of conflict protraction, informal activities are managed and criminalised by a range of actors in function of their capacity and their strategies to project their authority and sovereignty. It identifies an "informality/illegality divide" that runs largely parallel to the gap between de jure and de facto regulation of activities in areas affected by conflict protraction. This relationship between regulation and conflict protraction is then triangulated with the issues of disputed sovereignty and legal voids. These topics are explored against the backdrop of the Abkhaz-Georgian protracted conflict, analysing Georgian and Abkhaz (de facto) authorities' stakes in processes of informality, illegality, regulation, and criminalisation of a variety of economic activities.

Slade, Gavin

Informality as Illegality in Georgia's Anti-Mafia Campaign, *Caucasus Survey*, published online: 14 Feb 2017

The paper examines the anti-mafia laws in Georgia and links the decline of informality under Saakashvili with the use of punitive measures in a concerted effort to establish legal centrism over and above other extra-legal normative orders. The paper discusses the specific informal practice of the *obshchak*, or mutual aid fund, and how this evolved to become linked to organised crime, making it an object of criminalisation. Finally, the paper argues that punitiveness, framed in terms of fighting the mafia, was a key element in tackling informality. However, far from banishing informality, pressure in the criminal justice system led to systemic punitive informal practices within the state

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7 – New publications (cont.)

Rekhviashvili, Lela / Polese, Abel
Liberalism and Shadow Interventionism in Post-Revolutionary Georgia (2003–2012), *Caucasus Survey*, published online: 23 Feb 2017

This article looks at the informal governance practice of Georgia's post-revolution (2003–2012) reformers. Empirically, we argue that the deployment of informal governance strategies became necessary for the Georgian government precisely because its official liberal reform course was politically constraining and incapacitated it from coping with the social costs of marketization and political-economic crisis. The analysed case, we submit, has major implications for theories of governance and informality. As it stands now, the literature is predominantly preoccupied with improvements in the state's institutional quality. The Georgian case, in contrast, highlights the importance of institutional design. Utilizing perspectives from Polanyian institutional analysis, we problematise the ongoing propagation of market-enhancing institutional design and underline the importance of market-constraining and social regulation. Arguing that reliance on informality cannot be reduced to profit seeking, or even to formal systemic institutional weakness, we attempt to shift the focus of the literature on governance and institutions from quality of institutional performance back to the once dominant question of development studies, namely the content of institutional design.

Seyfutdinova, Leyla
Post-Soviet Small Business in Azerbaijan: The Legacies of the Soviet Second Economy, *Caucasus Survey*, published online: 25 Jan 2017

This article explores the legacies of Soviet second economy among entrepreneurs in Azerbaijan. Although many scholars have linked postsocialist informality with the practices of the Soviet second economy, the extent of the continuity between Soviet and post-Soviet informality is rarely examined empirically. Drawing on a number of in-depth interviews, two case studies – of one successful and one failed small enterprise – are used to illustrate the

continued influence of second economy practices in the post-Soviet period. The dependence of the post-Soviet private sector on the state bureaucracy and the mechanisms of this engagement show many similarities with Soviet second economy practices. It is further argued that the operations of Soviet second economy can be helpful in understanding post-Soviet informality.

Romashov, Vadim / Rytövuori-Apunen, Helena

Russia's Karabakh Policy: New Momentum in Regional Perspective, *Caucasus Survey*, published online: 23 Sep 2016

This article asks what opportunities are available to start untying the persistent deadlock in the Nagorny Karabakh (NK) conflict when we take into account not only the positions of the conflict parties but also the fact that Russia's strategic interests define its stance on the negotiation process and promote certain conditions for settlement. These conditions recognize Russia's existing military presence in the region as well as the political and economic influence embedded in its Eurasian integration projects. The article does not advocate any parties' interests, and it does not claim to present conditions which are acceptable to any of the parties. Instead, it examines how Russia's interests in the wider region, which includes Turkey and Iran, relate to the basic elements of settlement which have been identified in the Minsk Process as the elaboration of the "Basic Principles". We argue that understanding how these two action frames are interconnected in the Russian policy argumentation is the key to understanding its approach to conflict settlement in NK. Our main analytical point of departure is to unfold strategic perspectives by examining immediate and strategic goals in the policy argumentation. Empirically, the article concentrates on analysing the policy discourse connected with the major incidents of ceasefire violations in July–August 2014 and April 2016.

7 – New publications (cont.)

Smith, Hanna

Threat Perceptions: Russia and the Post-Soviet Space, *Journal of Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society* 2016 Vol. 2 No. 2 pp. 57-88

In the international relations literature, a threat is defined as a situation in which an actor (state) or actors has the capacity or intention to inflict harm upon another actor (state) (Davis 2000: 10). This paper examines Russia's threat perceptions through the four National Security Concepts of 1997, 2000, 2009, and 2015. Perceptions of threat have a strong domestic political element. They have been found to have significant effects on public attitudes, tolerance of dissent, and support for political leaders (Hutchison & Gibler 2007). For Russia, an important role is played in both domestic and international politics by its Great Power identity. In relation to neighboring states, the asymmetry of power combined with this Russian self-identity poses a threat, since the domestic assumption is that Russia has a duty or right to oversee these states. This Great Power identity also prevents Russia from having a shared identity with its neighbors, which in turn increases the Russian sense of threat posed by its neighbors. Thus Russia—a post-Imperial power surrounded by formerly subordinate states—both presents and is affected by a greater sense of threat than is the case elsewhere. This article draws on Rousseau and Garcia-Retamero's (2007) work on identity, power, and threat perception, to identify why threat perceptions are once again back at the core of policy making in the Eurasian space.

Wilhelmsen, Julie

Russia's Securitization of Chechnya, *Routledge: Oxford* 2016

Through which processes do leaders and their publics come to define and accept certain conflicts as difficult to engage in, and others as logical, even necessary? Drawing on a detailed study of changes in Russia's approach to Chechnya, this book argues that 're-phrasing' Chechnya as a terrorist threat in 1999 was essential to making the use of violence acceptable to the Russian public. The book refutes popular explanations that see Russian war-making as determined and grounded in a sole, authoritarian leader. Close study of the statements and texts of Duma representatives, experts and journalists before

and during the war demonstrates how the Second Chechen War was made a 'legitimate' undertaking through the efforts of many. A post-structuralist reinterpretation of securitization theory guides and structures the book, with discourse theory and method employed as a means to uncover the social processes that make war acceptable. More generally, the book provides a framework for understanding the broad social processes that underpin legitimized war-making.

Souleimanov, Emil A.

A Failed Revolt? Assessing the Viability of the North Caucasus Insurgency, *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* (forthcoming 2017)

This is the first article to systematically examine the factors that have led to the considerable weakening of the North Caucasus insurgency since 2013: the selective targeting of the insurgents' support base; the deployment of an elite counterinsurgent force and army in special operations; the infiltration of insurgent groups and their decapitation; and the departure of the North Caucasians to the Syrian Civil war. Scrutinizing how these factors have reduced the regional insurgency, the article also points to their shortcomings that have, as the article shows, since 2014 contributed to an increase in insurgency-related violence in the region. First, the risk of severe penalization notwithstanding, many locals, driven by the locally embedded codes of retaliation and hospitality, as well as by the sympathies toward the insurgents, have continued to provide support to the insurgents and to put up resistance to the incumbent forces. Second, with elite counterinsurgent force limited in numbers and increasingly deployed outside of Russia, a considerable part of counterinsurgency operations has again been conducted by local police, infamous for incompetence and corruption. Third, while decapitation has failed to put an end to insurgent groups, these groups' infiltration has become harder than previously due to the insurgent groups' increasingly selective recruitment policies. Fourth, the falling numbers of North Caucasian volunteers to the Syrian Civil war has provided more recruits to the jihadist groups operating in their home region. The article concludes that the North Caucasus insurgency is likely to survive in the years to come

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