

The author describes these links as unstable, as they began with a period of optimism but gradually weakened. Increasing opposition to EU membership and the concessions that are required for admission caused a delay in the reforms. In conclusion, the AKP's policy towards the EU shows the search for a balance between the need to integrate Turkey into the international system and internal pressure to not concede on key issues.

Finally, in the last chapter, "The Turkish Model in the Matrix of Political Catholicism," Stathis Kalyvas tries to answer the question of how idiosyncratic the Turkish model is. The author hypothesizes that this phenomenon is part of a global trend that could have clearly materialized in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Kalyvas defines the Turkish model and com-

pares it to the politics of Catholicism in Europe in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The latter can be explained through five elements: "(1) mass mobilization, (2) an anti-system political discourse, (3) the combination of an appeal to religious sensibilities coupled with a political message of economic inclusion, (4) the modernization of religious practices, and (5) the ultimate moderation of Catholic parties and the democratization of the political institutions" (p.192). With these elements in mind, Kalyvas further suggests a comparison between the Catholic anti-system activism and the so-called New Turkish model.

In conclusion, the book informs former studies on Turkey and invites readers to evaluate the Turkish model, with a series of articles that offer different perspectives.

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## Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Conflict in the South Caucasus

### Nagorno-Karabakh and the Legacy of Soviet Nationalities Policy

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By Ohannes Geukjian

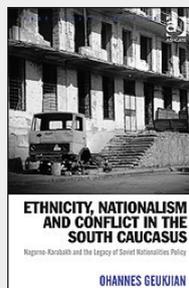
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Reviewed by Mehmet Fatih Öztarsu

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THE SOVIET UNION, which has two contradictory definitions ("Prison of Peoples" and "Free Association of Peoples"), is seen as the perpetrator of many ethnic and regional problems in Eurasia today. Its management of culture with numerous ethnic and religious elements and an ideological perspective that deflects criticism are the most important issues to focus on to understand the Soviet Union. The ideals imposed on social and cultural life by communist ideology – nationalism, religious movements, local conflicts and decom-



position – tell the true story of the Soviet geography.

*Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Conflict in the South Caucasus*, written by Ohannes Geukjian, examines the problematic culture of the Soviets within its historical origins by approaching these issues from

the perspective of the South Caucasus. The author, starting with the examples of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, illustrates that other Soviet countries have the same problems. Geukjian, who evaluates the impact of

chronic issues on Eurasia today by first addressing Nagorno-Karabakh, explores the history of Armenia and Azerbaijan. As the historical discussion of problems has a significant meaning for present times, it proves their historical existence in the region.

The author, who states that the first Armenians were seen in the Hayasa-Azzi Confederation in Erzurum-Erzincan and that Armenian culture was integrated with the Arimi-Urumea Confederation in Van-Mus, uses the Atropatena civilization as a reference point for the history of Azerbaijan. Given that this historiography begins in the 1940s, namely in the Soviet period, we can say that initiatives from both sides to strengthen their claim of being the oldest civilization in the region are more complicated. Geukjian tries to draw a cultural picture of the region by retracing the historical roots of the Karabakh issue. Nevertheless, the existence of the Albanian civilization in the Caucasus, which is a historical enigma today, leads to intense fighting over history. Albania, which is an ancient Christian civilization in the Caucasus, was a former Azerbaijani state according to Azerbaijan and a former state of the Christian Armenians according to Armenia. Geukjian uses the work of Azerbaijani historians, such as E. Buniatov, F. Mamedov and Akhundov, to discuss this issue (p. 33).

Geukjian, who notes that the first conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan caused the Russian-Iranian wars and that the first attempt to break up the Caucasus began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, cites some interesting data about the period of Russian dominance in the region. The author asserts that Russia deported 57,000 Armenians from Russia and the North Caucasus to Karabakh and Yerevan, and 35,000 Azerbaijani Muslims from Karabakh to different areas to destroy the homogenous

ethnic structures in the region and more effectively manage the local population (p. 41). The conflicts between the two sides, despite this migration policy, reignited because of the Armenian dominance of the Baku market after oil was discovered. The events that occurred in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are now politicized by Russian, Armenian, and Georgian social democrats (p. 44).

The author, referring to the periods experienced among the Turks, the British, and the Russians in the region during and after the First World War and eventually the interesting parsing policies under the dominance of the Soviet Union, emphasizes the need to scrutinize Russification efforts in order to understand ethnic and regional problems more clearly (p. 81).

Geukjian states there was a real consciousness of “Soviet People” under Lenin, but relations between Russians and non-Russians severely decomposed after his death. This consciousness was reinforced by three main elements of the Sovietization policy: economic development, anti-nationalism and collectivism movement (p. 87). When we examine these elements, we see that the ethnic disintegration and nationalism of Soviet rule increased due to this policy and the choice of decision-makers to make conflicts political. As such, practices such as political murder, intellectual genocide, intervention in publications, and censorship, which were carried out in context of the policy of Sovietization, boosted nationalism while also fueling hatred against the central government.

Geukjian draws attention to how the extreme practices of the Stalin era backfired and Leninist policies gained importance during the period of Khrushchev. The administration attempt to form an artificial sense of shared

history with the understanding of “Soviet Peoples” in 1962 was unable to bridge the gap between Russians and non-Russians. Rising political nationalism in 1973-75 became the biggest problem in Ukraine, the Baltic and the Caucasus. Georgian Zviad Gamsakhurdia criticized the pressure of Russification through Samizdat and Eduard Shevardnadze emphasized the issue of Abkhazia in Georgia (p. 100). In short, the practices during the era of Stalin led to the emergence of interethnic problems via oppressive anti-religious and anti-ethnic legislation. An inextricable problem emerged because intellectuals who opposed cultural repression were killed, citizens who did not speak Russian were treated as second-class citizens, and the central government improved certain Soviet capitals more than others. In the 1980s, the anger and hatred that people had suppressed for decades emerged through political activities and turned into an act of revenge both against the center and neighboring countries.

Geukjian, who discusses the impact of these policies on the Karabakh issue largely by using Armenian and Western sources, describes such formations as the Karabakh Committee, the Miatsum Movement and the Armenian National Congress, which were established by the Armenians as the first independence movements under the auspices of free political activity in the 1980s. Geukjian, emphasizing the formation of counter-organizations

and the local conflicts in Azerbaijan that materialized with the support of the Soviet government, notes that Armenia’s militarist approach in Karabakh strengthened the resistance. However, the most important question is why the Russians supported Baku against the Armenians. Although it is known that the occupying and slaughtering in and around Karabakh were carried out largely by the Russian-Armenian partnership, it is unclear why the author emphasizes the Russian-Azerbaijani association.

Geukjian, who also addresses the political friction between Yerevan and Karabakh after independence, offers the most important insight into the tension among the Armenians: then Armenian President Levon Ter Petrosyan guaranteed the Karabakh Armenians that he would not claim Karabakh. It clearly states that the ongoing friction in Yerevan-Karabakh was inherited from that period. Although the author tries to examine the period using a vast number of resources, he shares the rhetoric of the Azerbaijani side in a limited way, resulting in a one-sided approach. However, the Soviet policies, which are analyzed in the case of the Karabakh problem, are covered comprehensively. The book’s examination of the ethnic and regional conflicts that emerged on the basis of nationality utilizes a cause-effect framework, making the inter-communal problems more understandable.