

BOOK REVIEWS

Stephen May, Tariq Modood and Judith Squires, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Minority Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Author: Helin Alagoz
PhD Student in European Studies
Marmara University, Turkey
helin_alagoz@hotmail.com

In the last decades, a growing amount of academic resources on ethnicity, nationalism and minority rights can be noticed. Both politics and sociology are concerned with the debates on these issues. However, each discipline approaches these subjects within its own framework and most of these works are deprived of an overall picture. Political science concentrates on the impact of these subjects on state affairs. The ethnic and ethnonational movements mostly use the same merits supported by modern nation-states such as democracy, justice, equality and freedom in order to legitimize their claims. This gives rise to the reconsideration of these merits and directly affects the state attitude towards the ethnonational movements. In that sense, political science assumes the nature of ethnicity and nationalism as given and takes an interest in its consequences for the state.

For sociology the primary focus is the nature of ethnicity and nationalism rather than their relation with state. Questions of ethnic and national identity, focusing in particular on the

constructedness and malleability of identities are more significant for the social theory. (p. 3) The distinction between the two disciplines results in different perceptions of the concepts within the context of nationalism and ethnicity studies. For instance, political theory assumes “multiculturalism” as state policy whereas social theory associates it with the changing nature of ethnic identities. (p. 8)

Ethnicity, Nationalism and Minority Rights offers an alternative for the weakness of the extensive literature on each of these three subjects, which lack an interdisciplinary perspective. The editors of the book conceive political and social theory as complementary; therefore they claim that the two disciplines should be taken concomitantly to understand the essence of ethnicity issues. Thus, they gather relevant articles for both cores of theories.

The structure of the book fulfills its claim of interdisciplinarity. On the one hand this reveals the differences of the two theories to evaluate those issues. On the other hand, it gives an opportunity to notice the common ground that exists between the two. The first part of the book is written by social theorists. This provides a conceptual analysis before moving to their consequences, which is more significant for political theorists. For example, Brubaker emphasizes a “group” concept and necessitates rethinking what we mean by ethnic group or ethnicity itself.

He claims that taking as a basic analytical category not the “group” as an entity but “groupness” as a contextually fluctuating variable. (p. 54) Then Pieterse problematizes the notion of “ethnic conflict”. He introduces two opposite positions in relation to ethnicity. In his disease model, ethnicity is perceived as “an evil politics stalking the Enlightenment world of growing modernization.” (p. 28) On the contrary, the emancipation model recognizes ethnicity rather than denying it.

The essays of the first part, intentionally or not, prove the success of social theory in examining the definitions of ethnic group, minority and ethnicity. The political theory is rather indifferent to analyze them deeply while it is too much interested in evaluating their consequences for social and political environment. The difference between the approaches of two disciplines can be realized in the second part more clearly. The second part concerns the state response to ethnic issues. Thus the political theory is more influential. In this part, claims of the ethnic groups are studied in relation with the state’s attitude towards them. A state can pursue an oppressive policy towards its ethnic groups whereas another can implement more liberal, multicultural policies. Kymlicka contributes to the volume by making a comparison between state responses to minorities in the Western democracies and in the postcommunist countries of Eastern and Central Europe. He claims that Western democracies perceive the minority

rights in terms of justice, whereas the Eastern and Central European countries perceive them in terms of security. His argument is maintained by Iris Marion Young in another platform. She questions the self-determination right of minorities, which is perceived as a threat by the states. As it is seen in the essays, the main argument of the second part is that states and ethnic minorities form and display their patterns of behavior in relation to one another.

The last part of the book deals with the theoretical debates and tries to develop new directions. Parekh comments on politics of recognition and redistribution whereas Davis discusses politics of belonging and its effects on border and boundary constructions. Finally, Calhoun questions the efficacy of cosmopolitanism in both social and political theory. The essays in this part demonstrate a search for reconciliation between states and ethnic minorities and aims to find a middle ground.

The book presents a two-legged structure, which is intensified by a double conceptualization of overlapping themes. In that sense, it reaches its goal of presenting the points and arguments of social and political theory. It provides the aspects of both disciplines, which culminates in a general social science umbrella and exemplifies them by case studies. These can be counted among the strengths of the book. Thus it can be regarded as a recommended reading for those who want to reach a comparative perspective. The study also proves that some of the deficiencies of

political theory can be removed by the strengths of social theory or vice versa. The first part can be given as an example for this. It gives the definitions of basic concepts by using social theory because political theory underrates those definitions.

However, all chapters do not contribute in the same manner to the book. The essays of Pieterse, Brubaker and Oommen are more prominent in terms of their theoretical aspects. Pieterse's classifications of ethnicities and multiculturalisms make an especially significant contribution to the book and to the literature. His tables and hypotheses are illuminating. The essays of Eriksen and Kymlicka can be underlined for their case studies. On the other side, Calhoun's essay in the third part can also be taken into account because it questions the future of ethnicity and nationalism debates and develops a different understanding of cosmopolitanism.

Although a two-legged structure is presented in the book, leading to a social science umbrella, it lacks a thorough synthesis where differences and overlaps are discussed. Ten essays, which are written by different scholars, make it difficult to form such a synthesis. This can be viewed as the main weakness of the book. A general conclusion chapter apart from the conclusions of each essay could have solved this problem. Therefore, the task of developing a coherent, interdisciplinary theory on ethnicity,

nationalism and minority rights is left to the readers.

In this sense, the editors could have benefited from Calhoun's essay since his arguments on cosmopolitanism are more able to draw a general conclusion. As Calhoun mentioned, cosmopolitanism is usually perceived as the opposite to nationalism. This creates a sociological confusion and an obstacle to achieving both greater democracy and better transnational institutions. In fact, cosmopolitanism and nationalism are mutually constitutive and to oppose them too sharply is misleading. (p. 233) A peaceful coexistence of diversities is very much related to the mutual respect and tolerance for each other. In this regard, cosmopolitanism can be assumed as the best alternative to resolve the conflict between states and minorities in democratic societies.

Ivan Katchanovski, *Cleft Countries. Regional Political Divisions and Cultures in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Moldova. With a Foreword by Francis Fukuyama*. Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2006, 286 p.

Author: Stefan Ihrig
Research fellow at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, Braunschweig Germany; lecturer at the Institute for Turkology, Free University Berlin, Germany; ihrig@gei.de

Post-Soviet and, in general, post-Socialist transformation poses a variety of questions and since the early 1990s many have ventured to offer answers. A recent contribution to the debate by Ivan Katchanovski picks up the thread from the very beginning of this quest to explain – with the Fukuyama-Huntington debate.¹ Francis Fukuyama himself wrote the foreword to Katchanovski's monograph and this in itself would seem enough to guess with whom the book is aligned. Indeed, Katchanovski's monographic study tries to prove Huntington's stress on the "culture factor" wrong and opposes the notorious polarizing dividing line Huntington had drawn across Europe. Instead, he sponsors the term "regional political culture" to explain the problems of post-Soviet transformation and rejects Huntington's singular stress of religion as the factor that divides. Katchanovski attempts to show that present differing political cultures are the product of different historical experiences. His two case studies are Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, which he believes are "ideal cases".

His focus upon the East-West cleavage within both countries is reflected in the book's title - "Cleft Countries" - which is a phrase that the author borrowed from Huntington himself. Thus, Western and Eastern Ukraine as well as

what he calls Western and Eastern Moldova (i.e. Transnistria) oppose each other in political culture. The author convincingly illustrates these differences with a series of surveys, elections and other statistical data. One among the many indicators is the inclination to vote for "Western" parties in the Western regions and vice versa. What he means by "Western" or "Western-oriented" parties remains unclear. While such a classification may fit the Ukraine, in Moldova, neither the Communist Party which has been in power for some time now nor its previous alternative, the Popular Front, with its radical nationalist rhetoric, match democratic Western credentials without further elaboration. This is his first and main hypothesis - that the difference in support for pro-Western and pro-Russian parties are due mainly to regional political cultures. This hypothesis is developed in the second chapter (following an introductory chapter). Katchanovski's third chapter then shows what political cleavage means in both countries. He discusses voting behaviours, the issue of separatism in the various regions (Transnistria, Gagauzia, Crimea as well as the Donbas region) and attitude variances across the regions towards issues such as privatization, market reform and foreign policy. In the fourth chapter we find a detailed exposition of his arguments on the historical evolution of regional political cultures. In his fifth chapter he then rounds off his discussion with an analysis of "Culture, ethnicity, economy and political leadership".

¹ Cf. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York et al. 1992; Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. London et al. 1998.

As stated above, the main hypothesis rests upon the assumption that these regional political cultures are the product of different historical experiences. While he argues his case quite convincingly for Ukraine, there are some problems with his treatment of Moldova, especially in relation to the Gagauz and Transnistria. In general he is right, arguing that there is a difference in historical experience between what was formerly Bessarabia and Transnistria. Yet, the latter has not only not been part of Romania for a long time, as the author claims; in fact it has never been part of Romania. Indeed, that Transnistria is very much an artefact of Soviet nationalities' policy and as such not a historical region at all, seems to escape the author.

He stresses the role of the Gagauz' historical experience as the key to understanding conflict lines in Moldova time and again;² yet, he does not seem not to be aware that we (Western as well as Gagauz Gagauzologists) actually know very little of the historical experiences of this group.³ He ascribes the political inclination of the Gagauz to vote for "Eastern"

² Ivan Katchanovski, "Small Nations but Great Differences: Political Orientations and Cultures of the Crimean Tatars and the Gagauz," *Europe-Asia Studies* 6/57 (2005), 877-894.

³ Stefan Ihrig, "Die Gagausen - Nation-building ohne Geschichte? Oder: Nation ohne nation-building?" *Jahrbücher für Geschichte und Kultur Südosteuropas* 7 (2005), 75-99.

(Communist/pro-Russian) parties to the fact that they were forcibly expelled from the Ottoman Empire and found a safe haven in the Tsarist Empire. We have no proof of such a forced expulsion; it seems more plausible that the Gagauz migrated out of the Dobrudsha, because as a prime battleground of a series of Russo-Ottoman wars it was an area repeatedly devastated, offering only harsh living conditions. A visit to the Gagauz ethnographic museum in Besalma (in the autonomous *Gagauz Yeri*) betrays a similar reading of the past. The public memory of the Gagauz transports the belief that the forefathers who settled in Bessarabia were waiting to return to the Dobrudsha once it became peaceful again.

Given the strong focus on the historical genesis of political culture it is remarkable that Katchanovski does not rely more on the historians of/on the region and their work. He admits that there is a general deficit of research on how historical memory is transmitted from one generation to the next, yet he does not venture deeper into the literature on remembrance, memory and related fields (*Erinnerungspolitik*, history politics). He identifies many of the important times in history that we could deem responsible for producing a cleavage, yet conversely there are some important periods which are not discussed. World War Two as well as certain 'non-divisive' aspects of Soviet rule do not receive detailed discussion although they certainly are also part of

the historical experiences which influence political culture.

However, even though Katchanovski's prime argument rests upon the historical dimension and genesis of political culture and there are some flaws in his exposition of aspects thereof, his approach is nevertheless a promising one. The assumption of a historical genesis of current political behaviours is certainly right and this angle of analysis offers more insights than deterministic arguments à la Huntington, which mistakes cultural markers as cultural essence. Katchanovski's monograph is an invitation to political scientists and historians to take up the argument and dig deep into historiography and research to prove or disprove the longevity of political culture. The book is very rewarding to all those interested in tracking the cleavages in both countries. It recounts the history of transition in a focused way and offers an immense range of data – the 28 tables and 15 graphs in the book testify to the range of material analysed by Katchanovski. His analysis enriches a field of country studies, where solid monographs on post-1991 developments are always in need.

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Vahram Soghomonian, *European Integration and Hegemony in the South Caucasus Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia on the Way to Europe* (in German), Nomos Universitätsschriften – Politik, 2007,

Author: Stepan Danielyan,
Collaboration for Democracy Centre
stepandan@yahoo.com

The hegemonic aspirations in the South Caucasus give a noticeable boost into political scientists' interest in the current reconfiguration of the region. This new configuration rises in the course of a complex transition process that outlines the impacts of social changes in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia on the regional cooperation strategies. Originally written in German, Vahram Soghomonian's "European Integration and Hegemony in the South Caucasus" is an attempt to identify what social forces and capital interests push forward the Europeanization of the

region, along with other hegemonic actors, such as USA and Russia. The study raises the question of Europe's borders and emphasizes the role of the South Caucasus as a geopolitical bridgehead. Hence, the publication is actual and significant within the context of the elaboration and implementation of the European Neighborhood Policy Action Plans in the three states.

The originality of this research work lies in the systematically applied concept of the so-called "double integration" process: the regional integration itself and the transregional integration into Europe. Soghomonyan points out that the adopted European Neighborhood Policy in the South Caucasus is favorable specifically for the integration-oriented forces. Two main capital groups that encourage the regional transformation are the capitals of Diaspora and oil companies. Moreover, the author emphasizes the role of national social-political models and the productive capital in the scope of the creation of geo-economic advantages for the European common market in its Eastern dimension.

In the first part of the book, the author portrays the inner configuration of the South Caucasus by outlining the national economic models and the interconnections between the main transforming forces and regional actors. Considering the restructuring measures, he tries to show which paths of neoliberal policies or elements of the European social-state model occur in these three states. Special attention is

paid to the productive capital investments in the region. Some factors and mechanisms in the process of deepening the regional interdependences are described, which reduce the existing conflict potential and create preconditions for institutionalization of the regional cooperation. As he notes the level of democratic consolidation of each state gives additional advantages to be flexible and resistant in its relations with regional and external players. E.g., the stable development of democratic institutions in Nagorno Karabakh is one of the key arguments for the legitimacy of this subregion's independence. This empirically well researched section serves as a solid base for the following examination of the integration perspectives and hegemonic relations in the South Caucasus.

Soghomonyan describes alternative hegemonic strategies of external players acting in the South Caucasus. Giving some theoretical background of hegemony and its possible instruments, the author discusses the role of the hegemonic actors in the domestic politics and points out the critical aspects of the so called "colour revolutions" as well as institutional reforms and their real impact on the changing system of values in this societies. The '88 Karabakh movement in Armenia and the Rose revolution in Georgia are described as the important political factors of the transformation. This is very often linked to the different approaches of state and nation building.

According to the author, the European integration process acts predominantly with "soft power" elements, but creates hegemonic dependencies in a geopolitically important region. The anti-imperial character of Europe makes its policy more oriented on a cooperative, multilaterally oriented and legal-based controlling strategy. Soghomonyan describes this policy as the geopolitical dimension of the European integration process, which appears to be a test for the European Union with its claims of being a Global Player. Furthermore, he points out the Eastern direction of the European foreign policy has three main directions: firstly, the European strategy towards Russia; secondly, the negotiations about the EU entry of Turkey and, finally, the integration perspectives of the Ukraine and the South Caucasus. The slow Armenian-Turkish reconciliation in the context of the recognition of the Armenian Genocide and a broader modernization process in the region is one of the main obstacles for the EU and the USA to enter widely into the region. Being a part of the Wider Europe space, the South Caucasus lies on the borderline with the US defined Greater Middle East.

The European South Caucasus policy is relevant with regard to the initiated constitutional process, which stimulates the identity debate over the question of the borders of a political Europe. The issue whether Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia can become a part of a united Europe is linked by the author with the

ability of these countries to confirm their claims of belonging to the European community by consequent policy making on the national level.

This thoroughly researched and cogent study builds on the vision of the functional approach, according to which the interdependencies, on the one hand, and the legal adjustment, on the other, form the integration framework in the South Caucasus. Nevertheless, the author is very optimistic when analyzing the future of the South Caucasus. In other words, there is a strong emphasis on economic factors and considerable neglect of security issues facing today's Caucasus. For example, he states that "due to rational economic interests the cooperative parts of the elites and bilateral business unions gain ground [by] pushing forward a spill-over process in other policy areas". Though the role of soft power instruments in regional politics is predominant in this research, it leaves questions of how different approaches in security issues are related to the cooperative strategies and national economic interests. However, the rich research material and the numerous sources used in the book are delivering the nuances of regional developments.

In contrast to the previous literature examining the transformations in the South Caucasus, this study develops a new perspective of the regional identity formation and brings the subregional integration process into the common European context. Theories of European Integration serve as a

methodological framework for the analysis. In this research work, different integration and hegemony approaches are used. Besides this, the integration theories overlap with the methodological aspects of hegemony understanding that helps to explore the existing hegemonic structures in this geopolitically important region.

Based on the characteristics of the national reform policies of each state, the book explores the regional configuration of the South Caucasus with its three dimensions – economic, social and integration. Thus, the book reveals the social forces and political actors, as well as their approaches, which support the European Strategy in the South Caucasus.

The book is of interest for audiences in the countries of the South Caucasus and Europe. It delivers a fair research of several particular areas, which helps to examine the structural advantages of the European Union and its role in a hegemonic environment.