

This article was downloaded by: [Alexander Libman]

On: 21 July 2014, At: 04:55

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Europe-Asia Studies

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/ceas20>

Holding-Together Regionalism: Twenty Years of Post-Soviet Integration

Ararat L. Osipian^a

^a Vanderbilt University

Published online: 21 Jul 2014.

To cite this article: Ararat L. Osipian (2014) Holding-Together Regionalism: Twenty Years of Post-Soviet Integration, *Europe-Asia Studies*, 66:6, 1022-1024, DOI: [10.1080/09668136.2014.924761](https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2014.924761)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2014.924761>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

role in the region that had once been hers exclusively. This lack of sensitivity becomes particularly controversial given that in the 1990s the Western partners chose not to deal with conflicts in the post-Soviet space and even encouraged Russia to play a major role in the conflicts in the Caucasus and Transdnistria (p. 46). The problem of Russia being denied agency is also outlined when the author stresses that Russia–NATO problems were not caused by the very fact of its enlargement, but by the fact that Moscow was prevented from meaningfully participating in or influencing decisions of the most important political and security questions in Europe.

The analytical approach of the book is complemented by detailed accounts of relevant episodes of the diplomatic interaction during the negotiations of the Russian-led initiative, which shed light on many developments in and around the Transdnistrian conflict. The limitations of international mediation are pointed out in the author's discussions of the internal political debate in Moldova. A collection of power-sharing agreements and settlement plans drafted by international negotiators have been appended to the book which will also be very helpful to the reader.

Among the shortcomings of the book are those that can be addressed to many empirical area studies of international relations: a lack of focus on specific factors shaping Russian foreign policy. The author hints at an important role played by various elite groups in shaping Russian diplomatic tactics in foreign policy. For example, this factor becomes clear in the episodes of the appointment of Primakov and Kozaks. The author's investigation, however, does not seek to answer the question why the change in the foreign policy took place or why people of a similar ideology such as Primakov and Putin pursued different diplomatic options such as multilateral diplomacy as opposed to bilateral deals in the conflict-resolution process. Was this change merely a reaction to Western indifference, or was it caused by some internal factors such as foreign policy cognitive frameworks, institutional limitations, different backgrounds of Russian foreign policy decision makers or something else?

There are several other puzzles which one would expect the book to address. The author stresses the fact that although the OSCE Border Monitoring Mission on the Georgian–Russian border was an excellent example of innovative conflict prevention, Moscow effectively terminated it when Russian–Georgian relations soured (p. 39). This suggests that Russia's security interests in the North Caucasus were sacrificed for the sake of symbolic politics in the South Caucasus. This seems quite controversial especially given that the leading Russian expert on the Caucasus, Sergei Markedonov, argues that Russia's policy in the South Caucasus has been defined by the situation in the North Caucasus. The author also does not go into some details of the great power deals (in particular those between Russia and the US), which were sealed in advance and presented to the OSCE and Moldova as a *fait accompli* and which have often provoked resentment in Moldova. Some experts argued that the growing disappointment of Chisinau with the half-hearted US support to Moldova and their closed-door deals with Moscow pushed President V. Voronin to work closely with Moscow. The validity of this claim has not been examined by the author.

Last, but not least, a number of quotations refer the reader to personal diaries and archives of the author or internal OSCE documents, which makes any validation or replication of the work difficult. Despite all these minor issues the book represents a valuable study of Russian–Western relations, which should be recommended to a broad audience.

University of Cambridge

VSEVOLOD SAMOKHVALOV © 2014

Alexander Libman & Evgeny Vinokurov, *Holding-Together Regionalism: Twenty Years of Post-Soviet Integration*. Euro-Asian Studies Series. Basingstoke & New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, xiii + 273pp., £65.00 h/b.

IN THIS BOOK THE AUTHORS EXPLORE POST-SOVIET ECONOMIC, POLITICAL and cultural re-integration and try to address the question of why this process has been largely unsuccessful. The book covers

developments in trade, investment, shared transport, electricity and telecom infrastructures, labour migration, financial markets, and other key segments of the economy over the last two decades in an attempt to systematically present interdependence between the former Soviet republics. The authors start by clarifying the concept of 'holding-together regionalism' which they juxtapose with 'coming-together regionalism'. The idea of coming together anticipates integration of a group of established sovereign states with the goal of achieving closer economic, political and cultural ties in the long run, with the tools of such integration being developed from scratch. In Part 2, they explore the evolution of post-Soviet regional integration and continue to describe its political economy. They also offer an overview of the role of sub-national actors in the process of regional integration. Part 3 presents a detailed analysis of major areas of interaction between the former Soviet republics. Part 4 looks into external ties of the post-Soviet region with the rest of Eurasia through analysing both economic interactions and foreign policy.

The authors are proficient in post-Soviet affairs and demonstrate a high analytical standard. Their analysis relies heavily on macroeconomic data, but also on their first-hand knowledge of the region. In addition to several tables and numerous figures, the text is also supplemented with very illustrative and informative maps that ease the comprehension of the material. The authors also offer a good chronology of major events, including economic–institutional and security and military-related events (pp. 216–33). They look at the economic, political, institutional and military aspects of post-Soviet transition, placing an emphasis on economic processes.

The authors focus mostly on economic integration and use the concept of holding together, which is defined as 'regional integration projects emerging in a group of countries which have recently belonged to a single political entity and have very extensive infrastructural, economic and social ties between one other' (p. 112). Libman and Vinokurov consider this macro-region as a network of interconnections. Another feature of the book is that the authors address not only the complexity of the region, but also the complexity of separate issues and phenomena, highlighting the multiplicity of their characteristics, externalities and impacts on the outside environment, including both positive and negative ones. For instance, labour migration of skilled workers has a negative impact on growth, including in their home countries (p. 177). But it also causes, among other things, institutional innovation diffusion and necessitates cross-border policy adoption strategies. As the authors point out, spontaneous labour market integration requires 'harmonised legal treatment and regulation' (p. 178). Immigration regulations, labour disputes, working conditions, wages, money remittances, the shadow economy and employment practices are all of high priority on the intra-regional agenda.

New realities necessitate the development of a new categorical apparatus. Moreover, the definitional problem persists. From the start, the authors argue that the proper geographical definition for the former Soviet Union is Northern and Central Eurasia, considering the terms 'former Soviet Union' or the 'post-Soviet space' not a realistic option in the long run (pp. 194–95). But what about the notion of Soviet as a binding cement? The authors' references to Africa as an example are not particularly convincing. In my view, the solution will be the evolutionary transition from the 'Soviet' to whatever new term will be coined and accepted by the scholars. Market infrastructure that binds national economies together is not limited to railroads and telephone lines. Another important element of the market infrastructure in the region is common or shared language, and in this case it is predominantly Russian. Libman and Vinokurov present common language as a factor that may hold countries together and introduce it in their extensive regression analysis as a fixed effects variable. It is no surprise, then, that regression results suggest that 'countries that speak the same language tend to trade 50–60% more than the average' (p. 117). The authors point out that the positive effect of common language in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is visible. While the list of potential and tested factors of holding together presented by the authors is nearly exhaustive, some potential elements of holding together are simply missing or at least not given nearly as much attention as they should. These include, first of all, education, student exchange and research ties. Military cooperation is important as well and includes unified or compatible standards for weaponry and equipment.

The presented book is somehow reflective of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's idea of a union of Slavic states. In this context, one would want to see more discussion of convergence and divergence in development trajectories. The book would also benefit from placing more emphasis on some specifics, such as railroad standards, with even more details presented at the expense of generally developed issues. The book may be seen as yet another attempt to grasp everything. Geographically, it rounds up quite a large and culturally diverse region. Economically, the authors address a wide variety of issues, from market capitalisation to labour migration to railway networks. Politically, it takes the reader from macro-regional politics to sub-national diplomacy. Nevertheless, different parts of the book are, using the authors' words, holding together quite well. However, more focus on underdeveloped issues would have been desirable. A particularly welcome feature of the book is its economic focus on the issue of post-Soviet regionalism, rather than the political science approach that this topic usually receives.

Vanderbilt University

ARARAT L. OSIPIAN © 2014

Thérèse Delpech, *Nuclear Deterrence in the 21st Century. Lessons from the Cold War for a New Era of Strategic Piracy*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2012, 196pp., \$24.95 p/b.

THIS BOOK DEALS WITH ATOMIC WEAPONRY AND RELATED CONCEPTS and technical terms. The author's main objective is to argue that during the post-Cold War era, the perception and status of atomic weaponry and its related issues have seen major changes in both theoretical and practical domains. Accordingly, the author underlines that our thoughts of and perspectives on atomic weapons, and such related subject matter as mutual assured destruction, extended deterrence and self-deterrence, need to be revised. The author, further, is of the opinion that even the association between the existing global challenges like terrorism and atomic weaponry must be reconsidered.

In consequence, in Chapter 3 she provides a comprehensive review of concepts related to atomic weaponry, with regard to the new global circumstances. Chapter 4 examines the issue in relation to such international crises as the Cuban Crisis (1962), the North Korean Crisis (1950 and 1953), the India–China War (1962), the Azerbaijan Crisis (1946), the Yugoslavia Crisis (1946) and the Berlin Crisis (1948) amongst others. The fifth chapter of the book is about smaller powers in the nuclear arena. The author discusses comparisons between North Korea and Pakistan, which are among the countries that have atomic bombs, and Iran and Syria, which do not hold such weapons. Iran and Syria have a nuclear programme that, as Western countries argue, involves the construction of nuclear weapons. Israel attacked and destroyed Syrian nuclear centres in 2007. The author highlights in this chapter that the growing number of countries holding nuclear weapons, especially smaller countries, substantially threatens security in the world. Indeed, this is one of the difficulties faced by the international community in the field of nuclear weapons. The sixth chapter deals with the programmes and nuclear capabilities of larger countries such as Russia and China. According to the author, while Western countries, including the United States, tend to decrease their nuclear capabilities, it is not the same with Russia and China. In this area, China is a country that seeks to increase its nuclear capabilities. Moreover she notes there is a lack of interest among the great powers of the world in controlling and reducing the number of their weapons. Finally, the last chapter of the book attempts to address the competition between major nuclear powers regarding space and cyberspace. While discussing the competition between the great powers in the field of space and cyberspace, the author also mentions negative consequences on the process of prohibition.

Overall, it can be said that this book, with a novel critical and detailed approach, succeeds in showing that major changes have occurred after the Cold War to the status of atomic weaponry and its related issues. For instance, new actors like Pakistan, India and North Korea have gained entrance to the club of nuclear countries, and countries are now more likely to make use of atomic weapons. As a result, such concepts as mutually assured destruction or extended deterrence can no longer be