

SECURITIZATION AND DEMOCRACY IN EURASIA: TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE OSCE REGION, EDITED BY ANJA MIHR, PAOLO SORBELLO, AND BRIGITTE WEIFFEN. SPRINGER, CHAM. 2023. XVII, 411 PP.
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Abstract

This book is a comparative study of securitization and democracy in Eurasia in the context of transformation and development in the OSCE region. In various chapters of the book, special attention is paid to the most important general condition for the success of democratization, which is the guarantor of the political stability of the countries of Eurasia, involving the reform of society while maintaining the ability of public institutions to manage the transitional country. Globalization and the transition to an innovative type of development, a deep qualitative shift in the life of modern society, in its structures and mechanisms of functioning clearly indicate the need for a large-scale breakthrough in the methods of political management. The conceptual rethinking of democracy in the OSCE region is also stimulated by international processes that do not fit into the framework of the currently existing unified liberal concepts. Nothing yet supports the conclusion that sooner or later all the countries of Eurasia will adopt liberal values in the form in which they have been formed in the Western world.

The main task of the authors of this study was to analyze the process of democratization of the Eurasian society, which has a complex dialectical character, that is, a constant balancing between stability and development is necessary. This causes the alternation of democratic tendencies, that is, tendencies of liberalization, emancipation of the political, economic and cultural spheres with tendencies to strengthen the influence of state power structures on the development of the Eurasian society.

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The authors of various topics compare the current stage in the development of democracy, which has significant shortcomings, crises of political identity, parliamentarism, the electoral system, etc. This, in turn, leads to the need to concentrate volitional and power efforts in a strictly defined direction in order to resolve the problems and contradictions that have developed in the Eurasian society. Thus, etatization is both an instrument of regulation and a mechanism for self-preservation of the Eurasian society, a guarantor of its further development, ensuring the stability of the political system and contributing to the consolidation of disparate public interests and political forces.

Keywords: securitization, de-securitizing actors, peacebuilding, Ukraine, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, democracy, transformation, OSCE region, gender equality, neo-traditionalism, Eurasia, Eurasianism.

This comparative study examines the main approaches to the analysis of changes in the perception of modern dimensions of security in the OSCE region, as well as the application of a new wave of securitization in Eurasia, theoretical approaches to the study of regional processes of democratization and security associated with threats of war, conflicts and crises (Holbig 2023; Schatz 2023; Dankov 2023; Jones 2023; Poita 2023; van der Zwan 2023; Jerabek 2023; Mandelbaum and Weiffen 2023; Mihr 2023; Burgers 2023; Akilli 2023). The use of a number of provisions of the concept of regional complexes of security and democratization as one of the starting points of this study makes it necessary to analyze the question of how structured the regional dimension of non-traditional security is in comparison with the global one, and whether relations related to issues of non-traditional security form regional complexes in those within the same framework as relations in the field of traditional, military and strategic security, or they create variable regional complexes of non-traditional security, depending on the threats under consideration (Aydin 2023; Ditel 2023; Akisheva 2023; Maralbaeva and Pierobon 2023; Azizi 2023; Schweitzer 2023; Mihr and Weiffen. 2023; Rice 2023). The development of conceptual foundations for understanding these problems can become the basis for a comparative analysis of the specifics of similar phenomena in other regions, as well as for a theoretical understanding of modern inter-regional processes in Eurasia in the field of security and trends in regional transformations (Schade 2023; Ghioldi 2023; Anghelescu and Dzardanova 2023; Malikbayeva and Gabdullin 2023; Kilichova 2023; Zhirukhina 2023; Lamçe 2023; Mahmutaj 2023; Szeląg 2023).

Transformation processes have an ambiguous impact on security: information and technological development, increased interdependence of states, economic internationalization, development of industry, science, medicine, etc. As the pace of transformation accelerates, its consequences are becoming more noticeable: the energy and environmental problem has become aggravated, new dangers caused by the information society have appeared, interethnic, interfaith and other conflicts have aggravated, and the problem of terrorism is acute. As a result, the security space is expanding: it includes not only issues related to military and state security, but also security in almost all areas of human life. Throughout the history of Eurasia, securitization and the need for security have been and continue to be important for

individuals, communities and countries in the OSCE region. Tasks related to security and its provision in Eurasia take an increasingly important place in the modern public dialogue. In this context, the search for theoretical models and principles of scientific analysis of the transformation of regional characteristics of threats, risks and challenges to non-traditional security in the OSCE region seems to be very relevant.

Inter-state diplomacy within the framework of the OSCE Permanent Council has become an integral part of the modern system of international relations and, as the OSCE experience shows, is able to serve as tools for solving the most complex international problems that are beyond the power of bilateral interstate relations (Schade 2023, 3-9). They played a decisive role, and the unique institutions and mechanisms of multilateral diplomacy, as well as the methods of its implementation, had no analogues in the new and recent history of international relations (Schade 2023, 6-10). The gradual transfer of a number of OSCE functions to European and transatlantic international organizations gives rise to the problem of identifying those unique areas for the activities of the OSCE and its institutions of multilateral diplomacy, which it is able to perform more effectively than others. These areas, as the experience of the OSCE shows, are connected with the universal European character of the organization and with those predominantly auxiliary and coordinating functions that it is able to perform more effectively than European and transatlantic organizations, membership in which is not European and universal.

Development aid and the democratic process in the OSCE region is a political and social responsibility towards states (Ghioldi 2023). In the context of globalization, democracy as a way of political governance of society faces unprecedented challenges that call into question some of its very essential characteristics. Functional changes and new developments in political relations in all parts of the world have given impetus to a profound reassessment of democracy, and this raises serious questions about whether democratic institutions are capable of adapting to the modern context (Schatz 2023; Mihr 2023). The serious challenges that democracy faces today are likely to require fundamental changes both within individual countries and globally. The novelty and diversity of the processes taking place in the world are so significant that the historically established forms of liberal democracy often fail even in countries with long democratic traditions (Mihr 2023). An intensive search is underway for forms adequate to the new realities: the projects of democracy of participation, democracy of defense, and communicative democracy are widely discussed. Even the concept of “illiberal democracy” is used (as a kind of combination of democratic elections with authoritarian practices). Such a combination is typical for half of the democratizing countries of the world, where popular sovereignty, realized through free elections, leads to the centralization of power. What emerges as a result is almost no different from a dictatorship, although it has more legitimacy.

In this context, to update peacebuilding in the OSCE region, a comparative analysis with elements of a systematic approach was used, which made it possible to identify common and specific features of modern formats of international peacekeeping, trends and qualitative characteristics of its development (Aydin 2023). A descriptive approach was also used, which provided an analytical generalization of factual information on the peacekeeping activities of institutions of multilateral diplomacy in the processes of

post-conflict settlement in the OSCE region (Aydin 2023). The applied methodological tools made it possible to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the approaches of various international organizations and members of the world community to multilateral cooperation in the field of peacekeeping (Zhirukhina 2023). Here, the study is based on the experience of applied conceptualization of the problems of war and peace, the settlement of modern conflicts, the conduct of multicomponent peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the UN and other multilateral institutions (Aydin 2023).

In this book, modern comparative studies of social networks in Kazakhstan are aimed primarily at studying the factors of influence of online platforms on feminist and civic activity, as well as the phenomena of communication barriers and ways to overcome them. A large group of studies is occupied by studies of the influence of social networks and virtual reality on the perception of feminist and civic activity in Kazakhstan (Azizi 2023). The problems of the information society in Kazakhstan, however, reveals the insufficiency of a comprehensive social and cultural study of network communication as a factor in the formation of the information society. The chosen topic meets the requirements of searching for a holistic, consistent philosophical view of the problem of the emergence and functioning of the information society in Kazakhstan. Moreover, in terms of a comparative study of the influence of network communication on a social actor and the study of risks and prospects for further networkization and informatization of the Kazakh society, it acquires not only theoretical, but also practical necessity. Thus, the task of political science research lies in the contradiction of the application of traditional theoretical approaches to the formation of social attitudes in a fundamentally new environment of virtual social networks in Kazakhstan. Knowledge of the features of the formation of social attitudes in the social networks of Kazakhstan will allow the development of new methods for leveling the influence of social networks and propaganda.

In recent years, the problem of violence against women and children in the OSCE region has begun to be addressed at the international level. In many countries of Central Asia, their ill-treatment is still often hidden, denied, minimized, tolerated and interpreted as acceptable cultural norms and traditions (Maralbaeva and Pierobon 2023). Violent acts that would otherwise be considered criminal are legitimized when committed against women and children in the private family sphere. Consequently, violence against women, including in the sphere of family relations, poses a serious threat, primarily to human rights. It is proposed to identify as features of criminal violence against women in the Kyrgyz Republic violence associated with the existence of discriminatory customs, forced bride kidnapping and polygyny, which lead to the commission of such crimes as forced marriage, bigamy and polygamy, the public danger of which consists primarily in the fact that an unhealthy primary basis can be created for potential conflicts in the family, developing into violent crimes in the future (Maralbaeva and Pierobon 2023). Violence against women is exacerbated by social pressure to prevent women from reporting certain acts committed against them, as well as by the paucity of educational and other measures to address the causes and consequences of violence. All of the above brings fear and insecurity into women's lives and is an obstacle to realizing their aspirations for equality.

In modern Armenian society, over the past decade, the social and economic structure, the nature of political power, as well as the system of value priorities that determine the specifics of the country's development and the behavior of various social groups have radically changed. In the conditions of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (Ditel 2023), an important moment of the ongoing transformations in Armenia is the active involvement of women in social life. In this process, two interrelated trends take place: the growing social need for the use of female labor in various fields of activity and the desire of women themselves for social equality with men.

A comparative study of the phenomenon of the EU and its integration policy is of great value in connection with the growing number of integration associations in the modern world. In this context, the EU still remains the only organization of a deep integration type that has successfully existed for several decades and has survived a colossal transformation of the system of international relations (Mihir 2023). Fundamental shifts in world politics and the economy, as well as the rise of China and India, the return of Russia to the orbit of geopolitically significant forces, another round of escalation of contradictions in the Middle East gave impetus to the formation of a new architecture of international relations, which, most likely, will be built on alliances of mobile configuration (Schatz 2023; Schade 2023; Burgers 2023). Under these conditions, the study of the experience of interaction between the EU and countries that are geographically united in one space, but at the same time have completely different traditions of state, political, social and economic construction, is of particular importance (Ghioldi 2023). Understanding the integration policy of the European Union in Southeast Europe is relevant not only for understanding the regional subjects of international relations and directions for the development of European integration, but also for assessing global trends in the EU's relations with global actors. With regard to South-Eastern Europe, the increase in its transit importance ensured the growth of the interest of various international forces in regional processes. As a result, the EU has ceased to be an exclusive influential external force, although it still remains the only one proposing the concept of a qualitative systemic transformation of the region. However, the question is to what extent the concept of a qualitative transformation with the resources currently at the disposal of the European political elites remains relevant and attractive for Southeast Europe, and to what extent the movement towards rapprochement with the EU is inertial for the Balkan political elites.

In the context of the change in the modern architecture of international relations and the activation in South-Eastern Europe of a number of international actors that have their own history and traditions of interaction with the states of the region, as well as seeing its borders in their own way, the EU is forced to take a realistic position in order to achieve its own securitization. Therefore, for a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of European integration, classical theories are insufficient. A comprehensive study of modern integration processes requires a combination of liberal and constructivist approaches with realist ones. Its combination with constructivist theories makes it possible to study the modern integration policy of the EU in the totality of international relations.

The role of the EU in the Yugoslav crisis was conditioned by the process of transition from European political cooperation to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and, in general, the transformation from the Community to the Union. By 1997, the EU had developed a comprehensive strategy for stabilizing the region of Southeastern Europe, which required the existence of democratic political regimes and overcoming the acute phase of ethno-territorial contradictions. Therefore, the European consensus on Kosovo in 1999 was ensured not only by the recognition of the leading role of NATO in resolving the Yugoslav crisis, but also by the understanding on the part of the EU that it is in its strategic interests to achieve relative peace as soon as possible and the existence of democratic and loyal political regimes (Szelağ 2023). These interests themselves were seen in the expansion of the association and the assertion of their influence in Central and South-Eastern Europe.

In light of its new role and the successful integration of Central and Eastern Europe, the EU has decided to extend the experience to South Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, Russia sought to secure its own program by building a security community in the region through its Eurasianization versus Europeanization. However, the features of post-conflict reconciliation and state-building of the countries of the region, which Russia did not take into account, and the choice of a competitive integration track, led to a slowdown in integration processes (Lamçe, Eni. 2023). In the context of the changing architecture of international relations, this provoked the stagnation of the Eurasian rapprochement (Malikbayeva and Gabdullin 2023; Mahmutaj 2023). And the application of different Europeanization mechanisms to states with different internal specifics has shown its effectiveness for the EU.

A new stage of economic globalization at the beginning of the 21st century is forcing nation states to seek a compromise between maintaining political sovereignty, control over resources, financial and information flows, and the need to participate in supranational institutions: military and political blocs, economic unions and international development instruments.

Globalization has not led to a decrease in the intensity of regional integration processes; on the contrary, these processes have noticeably intensified. New international macro-regions with close internal political and economic ties began to form. Their development is in most cases stimulated by the activities of larger integration associations. One of the latest and large-scale integration projects is the China's Belt and Road Initiative, which was first put forward by Chinese leader Xi Jinping during his visits to Kazakhstan and Indonesia in the fall of 2013 (Rice 2023). This initiative is to search, form and promote a new model of international cooperation and development by strengthening existing regional bilateral and multilateral mechanisms and structures with the participation of China.

The Belt and Road Initiative is positioned as an alternative to superpower dominance or rivalry, in opposition to which China seeks to create a community with a common destiny for mankind and a new peripheral policy based on friendship, sincerity and mutual benefit. According to this vision, the Belt and Road Initiative can be seen as a priority of China's foreign policy in order to benefit the rapidly growing Chinese economy and bring it in line with the interests of neighboring countries (Poita 2023; Mandelbaum and Weiffen 2023; Akilli 2023; Mihr and Weiffen 2023).

The post-Soviet space is also important for China from an economic point of view, primarily as a market for its goods, as an area for investment. The European countries of the CIS (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova) is China's 'bridge' to the countries of the EU, which is China's most important trading partner. Also, the countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus have significant energy resources, which are so necessary for the rapidly developing economy of China. In addition, the countries of the South Caucasus have both resource potential and an advantageous geographical position with access to the Caspian and Black seas, so China is also actively interacting with Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. It is the Belt and Road initiative that is the key direction and basis of China's policy in the post-Soviet space. By developing cooperation with the states of Central Asia, the South Caucasus, the European countries of the CIS in such areas as trade, investment, construction and infrastructure development, culture, science, education, technology and others, China has accumulated significant and valuable experience in successful policy in a new region for itself (Jones 2023; Jerabek 2023).

The Chinese factor has already become decisive in modern world politics. China has actively joined the global processes, showing high rates of development, and has become a central link in the emerging system of geo-economic and political relations. Over the past decade, China has become not only the object of close study and study, but also has become a major actor in economic policy (Akilli 2023; van der Zwan 2023; Poita 2023). However, it is important to note that the presence of China in the Central Asian region causes concern and opposition from other major world powers interested in their geopolitical and geo-economic presence in Central Asia. In this regard, the interaction between the countries of Central Asia and China acquires not only an economic, but also a political dimension, since China has to look for compromise solutions and approaches in order not to enter into direct confrontation with its global partners (Akilli 2023; Dankov 2023; Holbig 2023).

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